

## EDO 2020: IMS, IPC, YIAGA Africa Seek Free, Fair and Credible Election



L:R: Mr Lanre Arogundade, Director, International Press Center, IPC; Ms Ivie Okoro of Edo Broadcasting Service, Dr Akin Akingbolu, Executive Director, Institute for Media and Society, IMS; and Ms Cynthia Mbamalu, Programme Director of YIAGA Africa during the live panel discussion programme at the station in Benin- City on Wednesday.

Some implementing partners of the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria project, EU-SDGN, the Institute for Media and Society, IMS; International Press Center, IPC; and YIAGA Africa have called for the conduct of a free, fair and credible governorship election in Edo State on September 19, 2020.

The Executive Director of the IMS, Dr Akin Akingbolu; Mr Lanre Arogundade, Director of PIC; and Programme Director of YIAGA Africa, Ms. Cynthia Mbamalu made the call during a live panel discussion programme tagged: *Media Engagement in Support of Voter Education Towards The Edo State Governorship Election*, aired on Edo Broadcasting Service, Television in Benin-City on Wednesday, September 9, 2020.

In his introductory remarks, Dr Akingbolu disclosed that IMS and IPC are involved in the Support to Media component of the EU-SDGN project. While IMS works with the broadcast media and regulator, IPC works with the print and online media, he noted and added that though the media have done so much in the area of strengthening the democratic process in the country they still face several challenges. He disclosed that IMS has been involved in many capacity building activities for the media to enhance their professionalism.

According to him, the issues of vote buying and election violence occur as a result of the desperation of politicians, which makes it important for increased voter consciousness about their duties as a means to check and minimize the trend. He also called for stiff penalties for electoral offenders, especially those who attack journalists on election duty.

He called for provisions for punishment and compensation for journalists attacked while on election duty to be included in the planned amendment of the Electoral Act.

Dr Akingbolu lamented the low number of women contesting for elective offices in the country and gave the instance of the coming Edo State governorship election that has only a woman out of 14 candidates and three deputy governorship candidates.

On her part, Ms Cynthia Mbamalu of YIAGA Africa, said on the programme that the organization has been on the ground in Edo State for pre-election and election activities and would be there for the post-election activities. She noted that YIAGA Africa has observed that 13 local government areas in the state have recorded pre-election violence.

While calling for further voter education for a more inclusive participation in the electoral process, Mbamalu urged the women and youths to fully participate in the electoral process.

She expressed the need to include the youths and women in the governance process to give them a sense of belonging and urged political parties to evolve ideologies that promote democracy while government work to strengthen institutions to serve the public- their real owners and funders- and not narrow interests.

In his contribution, Mr Arogundade said that his organization has been

engaging the media ahead of the Edo State governorship election. He said though IPC works with the print and online media, its activities and publications speak to all journalists in the media. He pointed out that IPC has a publication on election reporting that would greatly assist professionalism of the media.

In furtherance of its objective, the IPC, he disclosed recently organized a webinar in conjunction with Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria, on the Edo and Ondo State governorship elections with the theme: *Edo/Ondo Elections: Imperative of Safety Consciousness and Conflict Sensitivity in Media Coverage and Reportage*.

Apart from helping in building the capacity of the disadvantaged group such as women, youth and People with Disabilities, PWDs, the organisation also regularly conducts capacity train for journalists to keep them abreast of the new developments and ethics and laws governing the profession. He bemoaned serial violation of rights of journalists by mainly security agencies, noting that the IPC recorded 41 recent cases of violations of the rights of journalists in January to August, 2020, alone.

He further called on the media organisations to COVID-19 sensitive and ensure that the journalists they send out on election coverage are equipped with Personal Protective Equipment, PPE, besides getting INEC accreditation and armed with their outfit's identity card to avoid assault.



## 41 Attacks on Journalists recorded in Nigeria in 8 Months, Says IPC

**4**1 journalists have been attacked at different locations in the country in the course of their duties between January and August 2020, according to the International Press Centre, IPC.

IPC Programme Officer, Mrs Melody Akinjiyan-Lawal, made the revelation during a webinar on Edo and Ondo State elections on Monday.

The webinar, which was organised by the IPC, in conjunction with the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN) for journalists, drew participants and facilitators from the media, academia and medicine.

Akinjiyan-Lawal, who spoke on journalists safety during elections, said of the 41 attacks, 35 were on males, while five were on females and one was on a media house.

She noted that the nature of the attacks were in the form of harassment, threats to life, physical and verbal assault as well as damage to work equipment, among others.

The programme officer explained that journalists needed to take cognisance of the fact that nothing had changed in the way and manner politicians viewed election to be a do-or-die affair.

"So journalists must report effectively while staying safe in the dangerous electoral terrain we still operate.

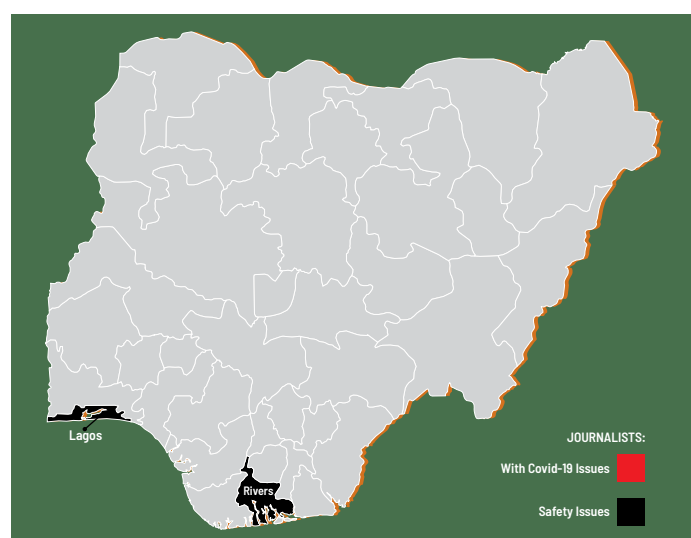
"In this regard, it is important for journalists to situate their role and interest in the context of the interest of the two major stakeholders which are the politicians and the people. "The candidates and their supporters in these elections will not care whose ox is gored for them to actualise their ambition.

"Journalists need to keep abreast of this fact so as not to be victims of any crossfire," she said.

According to Akinjiyan-Lawal, journalists covering the Edo and Ondo elections must not be partisan but must be smart and ensure that they moved in groups during the exercise.

In his remarks, Mr Rotimi Oyekanmi, Chief Press Secretary to INEC Chairman, spoke on the proactive measures taken by the commission to address security concerns ahead of the polls.

Oyekanmi said consultations with the Inter Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in Edo and Ondo were on-going to



ensure the safety of everybody during and after the elections.

"About two weeks ago, the INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, led a delegation to meet with the revered Oba of Benin, to ask him to intervene and appeal to political actors to allow a peaceful election.

"The respected monarch promised to invite them to his palace for interaction and he has already done so. "Plans have also been concluded for all the 14 political parties participating in the election to sign a peace accord in the coming days," he said.

According to him, with all the efforts, it is hoped that the election will be held peacefully.

Earlier in an address, the Executive Director, IPC, Lanre Arogundade, said the training was one in a series for journalists across the country, under the European Union support for democratic governance in Nigeria.

He said the safety of journalists was paramount in the Edo and Ondo State polls hence tagging the training,

"Imperative of Safety Consciousness and Conflict Sensitivity in Media Coverage and Reportage."

## Rivers NUJ Joins Industrial Action Over Non-payment of Workers Entitlements

**T**he Rivers State Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) has said it is an integral part of the Nigeria Labour Congress, NLC and seriously affected by the reasons adduced for the industrial action beginning on Tuesday in the State. This tough stance of the NUJ is coming at a time labour leaders in the state are said to have gone underground for fear of being harassed by the Rivers State government.

According to the Secretary of the NUJ, Ike Wigodo, the issues for the strike includes non-payment of pensions to retirees, non-payment of increment and non-promotion of staff since 2015

He said "gratuities and pensions for all our members who retired between 2015 to date have not been paid, Those who are working, have also not been promoted for the past six years. Their increments have also not been affected,

"Even nature does not allow stagnation. it allows one to grow in a given space of life, even plants grow so why is it that workers should remain stagnant for six years? he asked.

"We will have to join the strike, we support all that the NLC is doing to ensure that workers welfare are met. The NLC had asked workers in Rivers State to down tools in protest of issues ranging from non-implementation of the minimum wage, non-payment of pensions for several years, non-promotion, non-payment among

others.

According to the NLC, the industrial action became necessary in view of failure on the path of government to thread in the direction of industrial harmony in the state as it states that several appeals have been made to the governor about workers welfare but the situation remains

In its response, the Rivers State Government has accused the NLC of instigating workers into industrial action in clear violation of a subsisting court order.

NLC has said it is not aware of any court injunction and will go ahead with the planned mass protest

The Union led by Ayuba Wabba had warned that it would not hesitate to draw the attention of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to Rivers State if anything goes wrong with any striking worker.

## Lagos Protest: Police Arrest Journalists, Protesters

**F**our journalists, who were covering protesters who marched in Lagos in protest against the deregistration of political parties and increase in fuel and electricity tariff were also arrested alongside 14 protesters and taken to the state command of the Nigeria Police in Ikeja, the state capital.

The protest was organised by the Socialist Party of Nigeria; the group is demanding a reversal in the actions of the government.

Some of the arrested protesters include Dagga Tolar, Socialist Party of Nigeria, SPN, NEC member and his colleagues, namely Chinedu Bosah, SPN National Secretary; Hassan Taiwo Soweto, SPN National Youth Leader, and 11 others.

The arrested journalists are Ifeoluwa Adediran of *PREMIUM TIMES*, Abiodun Ayeoba of *Sahara Reporters*; Awoniyi Oluwatosin of *ObjecTV* media, and Daniel Tanimu of *Galaxy TV* whose camera was seized.

Some of the journalists' phones were also reportedly seized. In its reaction, the Joint Action Front condemned the arrests and demanded the release of the protesters unconditionally.

"The attention of the Joint Action Front (JAF) has just been drawn to the illegal arrest of several comrades of the Socialist Party of Nigeria by police and security operatives of the Area C Command. Journalists who were covering the event were also arrested alongside the leaders and members of the Socialist Party of Nigeria (SPN) for protesting this morning against fuel price hike, electricity tariff and the deregistration of SPN," Abiodun Aremu, the JAF secretary, said in the statement.

"The arrested include Comrades Ayo Ademiluyi, Duro, Engels, Davinovich and several others.

## Media Outfit's Society Declares N11.5m Profit

The News Agency of Nigeria, NAN, Staff Multi-purpose Cooperative Society Limited, has declared a surplus of N11, 496. 74 in the 2019 financial year

The President of the cooperative, Mr Moses Uzoagba, made the declaration in his address at the cooperative's virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in Abuja on Friday.

According to him, the financial year 2019 was better when compared with the surplus of N8,269, 478.98 realised in 2018.

Uzoagba attributed the cooperative's success during the period to the commitment displayed by the Executive Committee in venturing into viable investment.

"We wish also to state that members' individual and collective contributions assisted us to move forward and we also appreciate the management of NAN for its assistance and support.

"We also appreciate the FCT Chief Registrar of Cooperatives Society for the supervisory role and guidance to our cooperative," he said.

Uzoagba who said that there were 401 registered members of the cooperative as at Dec. 31 2019, then proposed that 69 percent of the surplus, amounting to N7,932,653.12, be declared as dividends and interest for members.

He added that the remaining 31 percent would be expended on other exigencies in line with the cooperative's bye-laws.

With this surplus, 0.32 kobo was then declared for each dividend held, and 0.02 kobo per saving.

Stakeholders at the AGM, both physically and online, expressed delight at the progress made by the cooperative under its current leadership.

Earlier at the occasion, Mr Ayuba Shekwonya, the Area Cooperative Officer (AGO), representing the FCT Chief Registrar of Cooperatives Society, commended the leadership of NAN Cooperative for showing good stewardship.

He, however, advised members to increase their shares and savings in other to keep the cooperative afloat.

Mr Paul Aliyu, a member of the cooperative, told NAN on the sidelines of the AGM that the progressive strides of the cooperative would encourage members of staff of the agency to invest more in it.

"The increase in the profit made from the previous year is a positive indication that things are being done properly and we are happy with that," he said.

## STV, Tstv Acquire EPL Right To Broadcast Live Matches in Nigeria

Direct to home pay television operator, TStv Africa, on Thursday announced on its Face book page that it has acquired rights to broadcast English Football League (EFL) live matches to Nigerians starting with Friday's kick off of the championship.

EFL is the second tier of the English Football League contested by 24 clubs.

Each season, the two top teams in the championship are automatically promoted to the premier league, while the third to sixth placed teams enter a playoff tournament, with the winner also gaining promotion to the premier league. The three bottom teams in the championship are relegated to league one.

According to the company, acquiring the EFL television rights means that Nigerians and other subscribers across Sub-Saharan Africa will enjoy all matches from the EFL in high definition quality on Tstv.

The company said it began test broadcast services from yesterday with signals from Berlintersat at 51.5

degrees East.

In the same vein, Silverbird TV would broadcast one live English Premier League match per week, courtesy of a sub-license deal with Integral, the current free- to-air rights holder for the Premier League Matches in Nigeria.

Integral secured its rights in a sub-license deal from the Infront Sports & Media agency, the substantive rights holder for free-to-air distribution rights in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Integral currently has a similar deal with national broadcaster, NTA and will now be adding Silverbird TV as an additional broadcaster partner. Silverbird will air one of the 3pm fixtures each Saturday on its free-to-air channel while it will also show a handful of Premier League produced magazine programmes weekly. STV can be viewed terrestrially on StarTimes Channel 109 and UHF 23.

Abimbola Ilo, the managing director of Integral said "We are once again pleased to be bringing the excitement of the English Premier League closer to its fans in Nigeria. Silverbird is an entertaining television station watched by millions of Nigerians and it's only right that the most entertaining football league in the world is added to its roster. With the Premier League's popularity in Nigeria, this is yet another opportunity for its passionate fans to get exciting up to date content on free-to-air TV"

Bola Salako, the Chief Operating Officer of Silverbird Communications; " Sports is a major part of our content offering and football in particular as the acclaimed 'king of sports' holds particular appeal to a large section of our target demographic. And with the new Premier League season on the horizon we are looking forward to team up with Integral on this exciting new project of bringing premium sporting content to mass numbers of Nigerian viewers."





## Justify Your Appointments, Lai Mohammed Charges New CEOs of Govt Agencies



Front Row: The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed (second right), Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Deaconess Grace Isu-Gekpe (right), Mr. Francis Nwosu, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Press Council (second left) and Mrs. Oluwabunmi Ayobami Amao, Director-General, Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (left) when the Minister met with the newly appointed CEOs of some agencies under his ministry in Abuja.

The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, has charged the newly-appointed Chief Executive Officers of some agencies under the Ministry to consider their appointment by Mr. President as a call to national service.

The Minister, who gave the charge in Abuja on Friday at his maiden meeting with the CEOs, said they must work hard to justify their appointments.

He specifically urged them to key into the 9-Point Agenda of the Administration, identified to guide the policy directions over the next few years and to achieve national development.

“You must consider your appointment by Mr. President as a call to national service, and you must work hard to justify it. A starting point is for you to ensure that the activities of your agencies key into the 9 priority areas of government.

“Of particular relevance to your various agencies, especially those in the culture and tourism sectors, are priorities 1, which is to build a thriving and sustainable economy, and 2, which is to enhance social inclusion and reduce poverty,” Alhaji Mohammed said, adding that the Ministry of Information and Culture is already working on these areas through its reform of the Creative Industry and the efforts to put in place a standard Audience Measurement System.

Describing the new CEOs as round pegs in round holes, he said they were carefully selected based on their respective track record of achievements, competence and years of dedication to duty.

The Minister said the CEOs are joining a government that is doing so much with so little, especially at a time of dwindling resources due to the sharp fall in the price of oil and the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global economies.

He said in spite of the challenges, the government has remained steadfast in carrying out massive infrastructural renewal in the areas of roads, bridges, rail and power, among others.

Responding on behalf of his colleagues, the General Manager/CEO of the National Theatre, Prof. Sunny Ododo, thanked President Muhammadu Buhari for the appointments and assured that he and his colleagues will consolidate on the gains so far recorded by the Minister, and strive to make the Creative Industry an enviable component of the Nigerian economy.

The new CEOs who attended the meeting are: Mr. Buki Ponle, Managing Director, News Agency of Nigeria; Mr. Olalekan Fadolapo, Registrar, Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria; Prof. Sunny Ododo, General Manager/CEO, National Theatre; Mr. Francis Nwosu, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Press Council; Mr. Ado Muhammed Yahuza, Executive Secretary/CEO, National Institute for Cultural Orientation and Mr. Ebetan William Ivara, Director-General, National Gallery of Arts.

Others are: Prof. Abba Isa Tijjani, Director-General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments; Mrs. Oluwabunmi Ayobami Amao, Director-General, Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization and Mr. Nura Sani Kangiwa, Director-General, National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism.

## FG Assures Journalists of Safety in Edo, Ondo Polls

Following the mudslinging and violence that has characterized electioneering in Edo and Ondo states, the Federal Government has assured journalists of their safety, while covering the election coming up in both states on September 19 and October 10, respectively.

Disclosing the nature of the safety measures put in place to ensure journalists' safety, Mr Rotimi Oyekanmi, the Chief Press Secretary to the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral, INEC, said an Inter-Agency Consultative Forum where all security agencies meet and take decisions of security matters on elections, will ensure safety concerns of journalists are sufficiently addressed.

He gave the assurance at a webinar on Edo/Ondo elections, themed: “The imperative of Safety Consciousness and Conflict Sensitivity in Media Coverage and Reportage,” organized by the International Press Centre, IPC, and Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria, ASCPN.

He said the Commission has taken care of grey areas that are of major concern to journalists during election coverage and urged them to be fair and objective in their reporting.

“We don't expect any problem. We expect fairness and objectivity in the reportage of activities because it will have an effect in the operations of the Commission and on the conduct of elections,” Oyekanmi said.

In his opening remarks, President, ACSPN and Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies, Bayero University, Kano (BUK), Prof. Umaru Pate expressed the Association's desire for peaceful outcomes of the

## Policy and Regulation

elections and the belief that journalists will “behave responsibly, professionally and not create conflicts.”

On his part, Executive Director, IPC, Mr. Lanre Arogundade, during the welcome address explained that the webinar is part of the Centre's collaborative effort with stakeholders at capacity building of journalists, which will continue till the post-election stages.

Arogundade urged the journalists to stick to Electoral Act 2010, National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Code and take advantage of the manual titled “COVID-19 Pandemic Reporting: A Safety and Professional Advisory for Journalists” available on all the IPC's platforms.

Executive Director, International Media Society (IMS), Dr. Akin Akingbulu, in his goodwill remarks, urged journalists to demonstrate utmost sensitivity to issues and navigate with professional tools throughout the stages of the elections.

Among the lead speakers at the event was Programme Officer (Journalists Safety), IPC, Mrs. Melody Akinjiyan-Lawal, who, in her presentation “Situational Scan on Journalists Safety Issues in Nigeria: What Journalists in Edo/Ondo Should Know”, advised journalists to shun partisanship, move in groups and alert relevant bodies when in danger when covering the elections.

A medical officer at Caleb University, Dr. Clinton Okonye who spoke on “Elections Coverage under COVID-19 Rules: Addressing Issues of Personal Safety” urged journalists while covering the elections to follow health protocols strictly maintaining that “we are the change, we are the cure.”

Dr. Ruqayyah Aliyu of the Faculty of Communication, BUK, in her contribution on “Electoral Conflict and Media Coverage: The Need for Conflict Sensitive Reporting in Edo/Ondo Elections” noted that the media is a key actor in curtailing violent election conflicts at any stage of the electioneering period.

She said: “The mass media must live up to its statutory and social responsibilities by upholding to ethics and professionalism.”

Senior Programme Manager, IPC, Mr. Sanmi Falobi in the closing remarks, sought for more collaborations with stakeholders on capacity building and cooperation across the board.

The webinar was in furtherance of the objectives of Component 4b, which is support to media of the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) but does not reflect the views of the European Union.

Mrs. Funke-Treasure Durodola, a Board Member, IPC and former Assistant Director (Programme), Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria FRCN, moderated the webinar.

## Editor's Note

Despite the fears of violence and safety concerns raised by the conduct of the politicians, Edo and Ondo governorship elections are on the card, courtesy of the dogged determination on the part of the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC and seasoned media NGOs, like the Institute for Media and Society, IMS and the International Press Center, IPC and rights and advocacy groups like YIAGA Africa to make the poll hold. The three organisations, which are implementing partners of the European Support To Democratic Governance in Nigeria, Project, ES-SDGN, jointly participated in a live TV voter education programme in Benin-City, the Edo State capital, during the week. The appearance was a professional round-up of media capacity building and advocacy activities by IMS and YIAGA, Africa, in the state since electioneering started there two months ago.

Then as the electoral umpire was putting final touches to the logistics and personnel issues to ensure the smooth conduct of the Edo polls, the news broke during the week that its office in Akure, the Ondo state capital had been gutted by fire which destroy close to 5,000 voters card. It allayed fears by restating its determination to go ahead with the polls. The intervention by the IMS, IPC, and YIAGA, Africa in Edo during the week is served fresh for your delight. It is our opening story.

During the week also, the IPC in a webinar it jointly held with the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria, ACSPN, for journalists, disclosed that 41 journalist were attacked between January and August, 2020. Security agencies were held as major culprit. As if to underscored that revelation, police in Lagos arrested four journalists alongside 14 protesters who were protesting the deregistration of political parties, increases in electricity tariff and petrol prices. The journalists were there to cover the protest, yet the police arrested and took them to a police station.

It is not bleak business for some media organization as the success story of an N11.5 million profit recorded by the Cooperative Society of the News Agency of Nigeria, shows. Check out the story on our page on Media Business.

The government appointed fresh, new CEOs for some of its agencies last week as we were going to bed. We bring you the new faces and the mandate handed down to them by the supervising Minister, Alhaji Lai Mohammed.

**The Editor**  
Institute for Media and Society, Nigeria

### NCDC Confirmed COVID-19 Cases by State, September 11, 2020

States Affected	No. of Cases (Lab Confirmed)	No. of Cases (on admission)	No. Discharged	No. of Deaths
Lagos	18,504	3,059	15,241	204
FCT	5,391	3,680	1,640	71
Oyo	3,210	1,130	2,041	39
Plateau	3,037	1,100	1,906	31
Edo	2,606	86	2,420	100
Kaduna	2,231	68	2,131	32
Rivers	2,197	49	2,089	59
Delta	1,780	116	1,616	48
Kano	1,728	48	1,626	54
Ogun	1,726	42	1,657	27
Ondo	1,575	53	1,488	34
Enugu	1,198	89	1,088	21
Ebonyi	1,034	18	986	30
Kwara	989	170	794	25
Katsina	826	345	457	24
Abia	816	96	712	8
Osun	804	30	757	17
Gombe	746	80	643	23
Borno	741	2	703	36
Bauchi	671	11	646	14
Imo	541	318	211	12
Benue	460	50	401	9
Nasarawa	446	136	298	12
Bayelsa	392	6	365	21
Jigawa	322	3	308	11
Ekiti	299	40	254	5
Akwa Ibom	283	28	247	8
Niger	244	16	216	12
Adamawa	230	35	180	15
Anambra	226	25	182	19
Sokoto	159	0	142	17
Kebbi	93	1	84	8
Taraba	91	12	73	6
Cross River	83	2	73	8
Zamfara	78	0	73	5
Yobe	67	0	59	8
Kogi	5	0	3	2

#### Highlights

- On the 11th of September 2020, 197 new confirmed cases and 5 deaths were recorded in Nigeria.
- Till date, 55,829 cases have been confirmed, 43,810 cases have been discharged and 1,075 deaths have been recorded in 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory.
- The 197 new cases are reported from 13 states - Plateau (83), Lagos (48), Kaduna (17), FCT (16), Ogun (11), Katsina (7), Imo (4), Edo (3), Nasarawa (3), Rivers (2), Bayelsa (1), Oyo (1), Osun (1)
- A multi-sectoral national emergency operations centre (EOC), activated at Level 3, continues to coordinate the national response activities

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