

Election-Day Preliminary Report on the 2019 Governorship and State Houses of Assembly Elections



4pm | 9th March, 2019

PREAMBLE

The Centre for Democracy and Development's Election Analysis Centre (EAC) deployed observers to 17 politically charged and violence-prone battleground states for the elections. Our fake news tracking and analysis unit has continued the work of monitoring and combating fake news and hate speech throughout the election period. For its part, our EAC, which is composed of leading experts on elections and democracy, reconvened to cover the Gubernatorial and State Houses of Assembly elections. This preliminary report covers the period from 7:00 a.m. to about 2:00 p.m.

1.1 Arson and Disruption of Voting

Before the commencement of voting, a number of incidents that are capable of disrupting voting were reported by our observers.

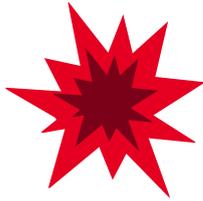
In Benue state, armed hoodlums razed down a Roman Catholic primary school in Aya containing electoral materials meant for Mbalom ward in Gwer East Local Government Area of the state. However, no election personnel was hurt. Also, in Manger II polling unit of Mbanyagber registration area in Tarka local government area which has 538 registered voters, a youth corper was taken, hostage. In the Registration Area Centre (RAC) at Yandev North in Gboko LGA, election officials were attacked twice. The number of registered voters affected by the disruption is 8,437.

In Ebonyi state, thugs burned down three RACs in Okposi in Ohaozara LGA and Oriuzor and Ekka in Ezza LGA, destroying election materials. About 75 polling units and voting points were affected, and some 36,392 registered voters may have been disenfranchised as a result.

This is extremely disturbing, and we call on all the relevant security agencies to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to prevent further incidents of violence likely to disrupt voting and consequently negatively impact the outcome of the elections.

Benue State

MBALOM, GWER EAST



Attacked at about **4AM** this morning

Mbalom, Gwer East has _____



10 POLLING UNITS



5,906 VOTERS

TARKA LGA, MBANYAGBER RA



A youth corp member was taken hostage along with election materials

Tarka LGA, Mbanyagber RA has _____



583 REGISTERED VOTERS

YANDEV NORTH, GBOKO



Election staff were attacked at the RAC. They were rescued but attacked the second time. Staff and materials in safety.



8,437 REGISTERED VOTERS

Ebonyi State



3 Registration Area Centres (RACs)

attacked by gun men in the early hours today and burnt all materials and the building. No lives were lost.

INCIDENCES OCCURED IN

OKPOSI — **OHAOZARA LGA**

ORIUZOR — **EZZA NORTH LGA**

EKKA — **EZZA NORTH LGA**

75 POLLING UNITS
AFFECTED

Out of the total **2,946** Polling Units in Ebonyi State

36,392 REGISTERED VOTERS
AFFECTED

Out of the total **1,459,933** Registered Voters in Ebonyi State

1.2 Opening of Polls

The general impression we gathered from the majority of our observers is that most polling units in their states of deployment opened today as and when due. Election materials and personnel arrived on time in most of the states under consideration.

This is in sharp contrast with the presidential and National Assembly polls in which late opening of polls was widespread.

1.3 Use of Smart Card Readers

Reports from our observers indicate that the use of Smart Card Readers has remained problematic in different parts of the country. Of the three functions the card readers -- authenticating, accrediting, and biometric capture -- the challenge appears most common with the biometric capture. In some places where they deliberately refused to use the smart card readers, manual voting was reported by our observers in locations like polling Unit Kazawa Primary school polling unit in Kazawa Ward of Kano Central Senatorial District and Unwanar Ganji Open Space Ward in Rimi Gado of Kano north Senatorial District.

1.4 Deployment and Welfare of Ad Hoc Staff

Despite INEC promise to improve the safety and welfare of corp members in this election, the early hours of the Election Day witnessed protests by ad-hoc staff who threatened not to carry out their duties until INEC cleared pending allowance. In Ward 03 Ajangbadi/Aganju Aka, Ojo local government area of Lagos State, for instance, our observers reported a protest by some aggrieved ad-hoc officials.

We also received similar complaints in Bolade RAC, Oshodi LGA; and Ijora Oloye Rac Center, Apapa LGA, both in Lagos State; and in Wards 5 and 7 Oyo Central, Oyo state.

Our observers reported cases in which politicians offered ad-hoc officials' money at the RACs. For example, in a RAC in Ikosi Senior High School, Ikosi-Ketu, Kosofe-Lagos, a presiding officer alleged that politicians offered them N5,000 each which they refused. The ad-hoc staff turned down the offer but instead demanded that they should be paid N40,000 while some of them requested N20,000.

1.5 The Security Situation and Electoral Violence

Our observers reported the following incidence of violence on election day:

- » Cases of killing were reported in Ahoada West Local Government area of Rivers; Ndoni, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni LGA, Rivers;
- » The abduction of a youth corper in Etinan Ward in Akwa Ibom state;

- » A violent clash between party agents and INEC officials in Achida, Wurno ward, Sokoto, polling unit 003;
- » In Oyo State, there were reported cases of voter intimidation in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area of the State where armed touts in Ward 4 Polling Units 5, 6, and seven were forcing voters to show their ballot papers after voting – an action that discouraged several voters from voting.
- » In Imo State, there was open ballot stuffing at polling unit 010A and 010B at Mbutu Ward, Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State. It is the polling unit of the former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and Governorship Candidate of PDP in today's election, Emeka Ihedioha.

1.6 Vote Trading

Vote buying remains a significant concern during the governorship and state houses of assembly elections. Buying and selling of votes prevailed despite the warning by INEC, security agencies and the anti-corruption agencies. On the ground, our observers reported seeing EFCC arresting people involved in vote buying. For example, the EFCC arrested some prominent party stalwart in Benue and Kwara states.

However, reports from our observers indicate significant role played by voters and politicians in the vote trading market. The trend, as we observed, is that voters are bargaining for a higher amount and sell their vote to the party with the ability to meet their demand. In PU 011, Madobi Ward, Madobi LGA, Kano State, vote traded for between N3,000 and N4,000. In PU 02, ward 4 Oke Balogun Epe local government area, Lagos State, party agents were seen writing down the names of voters who were expected to collect a paltry amount of N1,500 each.

Another worrying trend observed was that supporters of mainstream party disguising as a member of the smaller party to buy votes for their parties. Also, we gathered that agents of smaller parties were influenced to purchase votes on behalf of the dominant parties.

2 - Issues

2.1 Comportment of Political Leaders

In the course of today's elections, we observed cases of inappropriate behaviour displayed at polling units by different political parties and their agents.

At the Kofar Galadiman Dawa polling unit in Katagum LGA of Bauchi state, for instance, our observers described how the state's Deputy Gov. Audu Sule Katagum of APC who arrived late and, after casting his vote, displayed his ballot paper to the public before dropping it into the ballot box.

Similarly, at Shiyar Majema polling unit in Bodinga LGA of Sokoto state, APC and PDP agents clashed over disagreements as to where the voting cubicle should be positioned.

2.2 Under Age Voting

Cases of underage voting were reported by our observers in Kano central and Kano south senatorial districts of Kano state.

2.3 Arbitrary arrest, intimidation and harassment of observers

One of our observers was arrested and harassed by over-zealous military officers, A. S. Atunwa and R. Badamasi, on his way to Mile 2 area of Lagos State to report a protest by INEC ad-hoc staff over non-payment of their allowance. While embarking on his civic duty, on getting to a checkpoint along Ojo military barracks, he was stopped by the military personnel. Despite showing them INEC accreditation tags, he was wrongly accused of being a party agent. The observer was subjected to unnecessary scrutiny and interrogation. The military personnel scanned through his phone and WhatsApp messages. He was later released after being delayed for more than one hour.

Signed:

Prof. Adele Jinadu, Chair, CDD-EAC

Idayat Hassan, Director, CDD



Centre for Democracy & Development
Centre pour la démocratie et le développement

The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) was established in the United Kingdom in 1997 as an independent, not-for-profit, research training, advocacy and capacity building organization

Address

16, A7 Street Mount Pleasant Estate
(CITEC), Jabi Airport Road, Abuja.

Phone No

+23492902304

Email

cddabv@cddwestafrica.org

Website

www.cddwestafrica.org