

ELECTION SECURITY THREATS ASSESSMENT FOR KOGI STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION, 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Election Security Threats Assessment (ESTA) survey report explores election risk factors in the upcoming November 2019 Kogi State governorship election. The broad objective is to identify early warning signals that could assist all the relevant stakeholders in devising and deploying appropriate responses against security threats to the election. Data for the study were collected using the Election Violence Mitigation and Advocacy Tool (EMVAT), to elicit information from 928 respondents (general public and experts) across the state. The data were analyzed descriptively and interpretatively using tables, frequency distribution and simple percentages.

The survey study in Kogi State identified a number of Election Risk Factors or Election Security Threats rated by the respondents in the following order of importance to include:

First, in terms of Political Exclusions of groups leading to Electoral Violence, the survey showed that: i) the Youth rated as highly excluded (83%); ii) Women (78%); iii) ethnic Minorities (74%); and iv) the Elderly (70%) as the most excluded groups politically.

Secondly, in terms of Actors that may constitute significant threats to the Peaceful Election in Kogi State come November, 2019, the respondents rated: i) Religious Extremist, Cultist and other Armed groups (73%); ii) Security Agencies (70%); iii) Vigilante groups (68%); iv) Political Parties (Intra and Inter party) (65%); v) INEC (62%); and vii) Party Thugs (61%).

Thirdly, in terms of Party Politics contributing to electoral violence in Kogi, the respondents depicted the following: i) Undue Influence of Money and God-father (82%); ii) Lack of Training and corruption of party Agents (79%); iii) Lack of Transparency and Disagreement over the Selection of party Officials and candidates (78%); iv) Disorderly Party Rallies, Processions, and Campaigns (75%); and v) Defectors and Cross-carpeting from One party to Another (68%).

Fourthly, in terms of Election Management leading to Election Violence in Kogi, the study reveals that the following are very likely to occur: i) Partiality of INEC Officials (82%); ii) Problem of Underage Registration (73%); iii) Problems associated with the continuous Voter Registration exercise (69%); iv) Failure to prosecute Electoral Offenders (68%); v) Poor voter Education by INEC (65%); and vi) substitution of Trained Electoral Officials (64%).

Sixthly, in terms of the Security Arrangement constituting a threat leading to election violence, the study exhibits the following for Kogi: i) Partiality of Security Agents (80%); ii) Low Sense of Safety Among members of the Public (Banditry, Kidnapping, Assassinations, etc.) (80%); iii) Lack of Synergy between INEC and Security Agents (79%); iv) Poor Training and low Professionalism of Security Agents (78%); v) Lack of Synergy Among Security Agents (76%); vi) Problems Associated with the Deployment of Security Agents (75%); vii) Inadequate or excessive presence of Security Agents (74%); and viii) Aggressive and Excessive use of Force (72%).

Seventh, in considering the role of the Judiciary to Election Violence in Kogi, the study reveals the following are most likely to lead to violence in the upcoming elections: i) Delays in the Handling of Pre-election cases (68%); ii) Confusing and Contradictory Court decisions (65%); iii) Partiality of the Judiciary (64%); iv) Capacity of the Judiciary (Including Inadequate of Judges) (59%); and lastly, v) Corruption and integrity of the Judiciary (54%).

Lastly, assessing the role of the Media and Electoral violence in Kogi elections, the study reveals as follows: i) Broadcast and Publishing of hatred (76%); ii) Misinformation of the Public by the Media (72%); iii) Failure of Registration Bodies to ensure adherence to established Rules by the Media (69%); iv) Abuse of Social Media (64%); and v) Sensationalism and Provocation by the Media (63%).

Overall, the outlook for a peaceful election was generally impressive. However, there are variations across the 17 LGAs surveyed out of 21 LGAs. The study found high prospects of a very peaceful election in Fifteen (15) out of the Seventeen LGAs, 17 LGAs: Ibaji, Idah, Igalamela Odolu, Ijumu, Kabba Bunu, Lokoja, Mopamuro; Ofu, Ogori/Magongo, Okene, Omala, and Yagba East; moderately peaceful election in Four other LGAs: Adavi, Bassa, Dekina, and Yagba West; and violent election in One LGAs: Kogi.

In the light of the foregoing results, key stakeholders in the electoral processes particularly INEC, political parties, security agents, mass media and CSOs need to pay increasing attention to the identified election risk factors and threats with a view to tackling them headlong. The risk and threats demands short, medium and long terms interventions that will focus and address the roots of the highlighted contradictions in a sequential manner. Specifically, the following recommendations are considered pertinent:

POLICY AND PROGRAMMING IMPLICATIONS

1. Building coalition of network of partnership that would ensure secured elections;
2. Police are not to be seen as the sole proprietors of security during elections, rather we should encourage inter-agency collaborations in matters of elections;
3. The Local Government Areas are often the theatres of violence and conflicts, hence emphases should be placed on them and what role can the authority play in mitigation and early warning;
4. Creating framework for advocacy and sensitisation of the Public, INEC staff, Security Agencies and allied partners;
5. Adopting a template of ethical behaviours by Politicians and Parties
6. Evolving measure that would enhance internal democracies in political parties
7. Special capacity building on elections for the Judiciary and strengthening of the processes
8. General ethical discussion about the ethos and values of democratic values and culture across all spectrums of society
9. Democratic values to attain agenda status rather than regional and restructuring discuss in national life

10. Ensuring adequate and early funding of INEC to allow for better planning and deployment for elections
11. Over all capacity building for all sectors involving civil societies and other cross platform organisations to ensure transparency and openness of the electoral process.
12. Evolving a charter for a violence free election all across all stakeholders with roles and responsibilities clearly defined.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

- a. There is the need to ensure effective monitoring of the media, particularly, online social media platforms, in other to mitigate emotionally sensitive statements such hate speech's, ethnically sensitive states and more that are likely to trigger ethno-religious violence, regional sentiments and more during elections. A special and great attention should be focused on policies and laws regulating self/individual publishing on all online platforms in Nigeria to contain and manage hate speech and other emotive sentiments that mar or make elections violent
- b. Idleness and poverty are among the youth contributes to their vulnerability to drug abuse and manipulation into causing electoral violence. Government at all levels should embark of effective job creation to reduce the number of unemployed youths who partly out of frustration engage in drug trafficking and consumption.
- c. Ahead of the elections. The security agencies are to be encouraged to engage in multi-agency research and mapping exercise that discreetly identifies hotspots of drug use and abuses by identifying their networks, routes and actors that pursue hard drug trafficking and smuggling in the region.
- d. Political parties should develop and sign Peace Commitment Charter (PCC). Through the Charter, through this charters, the political parties shall embark on their traditional role of socio-political orientation, awareness and conscientisation of the electorate to embrace peace and shun violence.
- e. There is the need for training of some key stakeholders to ensure and enhance professionalism and accountability in the discharge of their election duties. The training should focus on high factor stakeholders to include INEC Staff, media practitioners, security agents, civil society groups, by acquainting them with the skills, experiences and wider appreciation of their responsibilities before, during and after elections to avoid the manifestation of violence.
- f. All the media outlets and outfits are to be made to adopt ethical codes that ensures they commit to promoting impartial news and documentary reporting on the entire electoral process, to guarantee and ensure the integrity of the elections and foster unity and confidence among all political stakeholders.
- g. The need for Advocacy on Nigerian Political parties to adapt the ideals and principles of internal democracy in terms of the elections of party officials and candidates to carry the

flag of the party. Most fundamental is for Political parties to adapt the global fundamental principles of inclusive politics in spectrum of fair representation of gender, religion, age category, and locality.

- h. All levels of Government in Nigeria: the federal, state and local government must evolve framework and processes that are capable of managing people's expectations in the coming elections through effective and efficient service delivery, as well as a strategic communication to ensure that electoral technical hitches are not misinterpreted as attempts to favour a particular party or candidate in the elections.

INTRODUCTION

The Northcentral zone is also one of the most volatile geo-political regions of the country, with numerous sources and manifestations of conflicts caused by a combination of complex factors. Some of the common conflicts identified as requiring immediate responses across the zone relate to: politically-motivated conflicts, ethno-religious conflicts, climate and resource-related conflicts (especially, land disputes, farmers/herders clashes), governments and policy failures, the rise in criminality and criminal acts (e.g. rural banditry and kidnappings) and the phenomenal increase in social problems (e.g. resulting from drug addiction, sexual offences, the pangs of unemployment, the heightening of divorce rates, the adverse impact of illiteracy and ignorance, the trigger of abnormally-high school drop-out rates, etc.) – which eventually often all tended to translate into serious sources of conflict and insecurity in the zone¹.

There exist numerous factors that are responsible, directly or indirectly, for the types of conflicts prominent in the northcentral zone. The causes of these variety of conflicts has been generally ascribed to the following: widespread impoverishment, deprivations and the high cost of living – especially in a period of economic recession; high and rapid population increases but without corresponding increase in opportunities; high unemployment rates, especially among the youth; high illiteracy and widespread ignorance; the fight for supremacy by politicians and religious leaders; the perceived marginalisation and social exclusion of some groups and sections within the geo-polity; provocative preaching and intra-sect leadership tussles; fanaticism; rural-urban migration as well as uncontrolled immigration from the neighbouring countries; climate change and the increased pressure and cost of land – which make access to farming and grazing much more difficult; the rise in social crimes, like the rape of girls and boys; activities of local thugs, miscreants and gangs; the perpetration of hate speeches on radio stations and the social media; widespread usage and abuse of harmful drugs (male and female); weakening of the control institutions like the family – also increasingly ridden with cases of neglect, violence, sexual molestation, etc. the latest penchant for the delay and irregular payment of workers’ wage bills, especially in the LGAs, but also in the states; the perceived insensitive policies of government, etc.²

Correspondingly, the major actors attributed to these types of incidences and frequencies of conflicts in the North-Central zone have been narrowed down to the following: politicians; political thugs and hired spokespersons (men/women); farmers and herders; unemployed youth; ex-service personnel and the local vigilante groups; religious fanatics; factional leaders in religions, markets, etc. criminal gangs; high-profile absentee farmers; corrupt judicial, security and traditional institutions’ officials. The occurrences of conflict and acts of insecurity, or the threats to social peace, in the zone are found to be generally common to all the states – even when each state appears to have one peculiar form of conflict and insecurity situation that seems to be its major area of challenge. For instance, in some of the states, political conflict is top on their list of worries; while, in others, it bothers more on religious and/or ethnic conflicts. This study is limited in focus to only Kogi States out of the six (6) states of the Zone.

¹ Ibid. Pp.229

² Ibid. Pp.229

Kogi state citizens shall soon head for the the polls come November, 2019 in a gubernatorial election to elect a governor that will govern the state for the next four years. All strong indications indicate that the election promises to be one of the most keenly contested in the state under the fourth republic. The potential for violence is also exemplified by a number of recent developments in the party primaries, particularly from the opposition camp. Most importantly for this study is the presence of election risk factors, most notably a history of electoral violence, cultism, militancy, kidnapping, contentious party primaries and candidate selection, use of arms in the primaries, intra-party conflict and fractionalization symbolized by a gale of defections, unhealthy inter-party rivalry, widespread resort to hate speeches and abuse of social media, among others, attests to this possibility.

This challenges places huge responsibility on all electoral stakeholders, notably the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), political parties, security agencies, mass media and others in the administration of the election. The way these agencies comport themselves could help to salvage the situation or exacerbate it. This Election Security Threats Assessment (ESTA) report explores potential election security threats in the general election with a view to identifying early warning signals that could assist relevant stakeholders in devising and deploying appropriate responses.

The analysis is important for a number of reasons. Apart from its relevance to policy and advocacy, it also has the prospects of fostering the effectiveness of the administration of the governorship election. Lessons learnt from the processes can also be helpful in redrawing the map for future elections.

PROFILE OF FOCAL STATES

It is pertinent to provide a brief overview of the focal states where field works were conducted, that is Kogi states, before proceeding to discuss the study methodology adopted.

KOGI STATE

Kogi state is situated in the North-Central geo-political zones of Nigeria. It was created in 1991 from portions of eastern Kwara and western Benue states. Kogi is bordered by the states of Nassawara to the northeast; Benue to the east; Enugu, Anambra, and Delta to the south; Ondo, Ekiti, and Kwara to the west; and Niger to the north. Abuja Federal Capital Territory also borders Kogi to the north.

Kogi state is also located in the central region (Middle-Belt) of Nigeria. It is popularly called the Confluence State because of the confluence of River Niger and River Benue at its capital, Lokoja, which is the first administrative capital of modern-day Nigeria. The state consists of a wooded savanna region bisected by the southward-flowing Niger River; the Benue River, a major tributary of the Niger, forms part of the state's northeastern border. The major Cities of the states are Lokoja, Okene, Anpka, Ayiamgba.

The Population of the State by the last census of 2006 is estimated at 3,278,487. The Igala peoples are the main ethnic group east of the Niger, while the Igbira and Yoruba live west of the river. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Major crops include yams, cassava (manioc), rice, sorghum, beans, corn (maize), and cotton. Riverine fishing is also important. As Agriculture is the

main stay of the state economy with fishing prominent in the riverine areas like Lokoja, Idah, Baji, etc., and the state also has coal, petroleum, steel and other mineral industries.

The Economic profile of the state reveals that Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy and the principal cash crops. There are many Farm produce from the state notably coffee, cocoa, palm oil, cashews, groundnuts, maize, cassava, yam, rice. Mineral resources include coal, limestone, iron, petroleum and tin. The State is home to the largest iron and steel industry in Nigeria - Ajaokuta Steel.

Coal is mined for national distribution from the Okaba fields in the northern Udi-Nsukka Plateau, east of the Niger River. Nigeria's largest known deposit of iron ore is found on the Agbaja Plateau north of the state capital, Lokoja. Marble is quarried at Jakura, 20 miles (32 km) northwest of Lokoja, and the town has a lime-processing plant as well. Ajaokuta is the site of a major iron and steel plant. Lokoja, on the west bank of the Niger River, is connected by road northward to Abuja and southwestward to Benin City. Idah, on the east bank of the Niger, is a major trading and ferrying port.

The Ethnic profile of Kogi States depicts that there are three main ethnic groups and languages in Kogi: Igala, Ebira, and Okun (similar to Yoruba) with other minorities like Bassa, a small fraction of Nupe mainly in Lokoja, the Ogugu subgroup of the Igala, Gwari, Kakanda, Oworo people (similar to Yoruba), Ogori Magongo and the Eggan community.

The Local Government Areas (LGAs) are 21 LGAs as follows: - Adavi, Ajaokuta, Ankpa, Bassa, Dekina, Ibaji, Idah, Igalamela-Odolu, Ijumu, Kabba/Bunu, Kogi, Lokoja, Mopa-Muro, Ofu, Ogori/Magongo, Okehi, Okene, Olamaboro, Omala, Yagba East, Yagba West, Oju, Okpokwu, Otukpo, Tarka, Ukum, Ushongo, Vandeikya.

Map of Kogi State showing Senatorial Districts



Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-Kogi-State-Nigeria-showing-Igala-speaking-area_fig1_287444248

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A. Factors likely to Cause Violence in the Election

Despite the hugely impressive positive outlook of a peaceful election, the study found that there were a number of election risks factors that could trigger violence during the governorship election in the state if not mitigated. Such factors, in their order of rating by the respondents, include a) Exclusion and Discrimination against the youth (83%); b) Religious Extremist, Cultist and Other Armed groups (73%); c) Undue influence of Money and god fathers (82%); d) Partiality of INEC (76.2%); e) Partiality of security Agents (80%), Delays in the handling of pre-election cases (68%); and f) Broadcast and publishing of Hatred (71.8%). These are the most critical factors that could trigger violence in the governorship election, each with an aggregate score of above 83%.

Other electoral risk factors identified include drug Abuse (84%), Ambiguous Electoral Laws (78%), Disenchantment with the Electoral process (82%), Hate speeches (86%), Inter-ethnic/religious/communal conflicts (68%), Illegal immigrants (77%), and Nature of of politicking in the state (84%) (Troublesome Politicians, Political Parties, Leaders, and candidates).

B. Actors likely to cause Electoral violence in each state

The roles of some actors were also found to be critical to the peacefulness or otherwise of the election. In their order of magnitude, the three most critical actors identified as posing some risks of violence to the election are a) Religious extremists/cultists/armed groups (73%); and b) security agencies (70%) and Vigilante groups (68%) with an average score above 70%.

Others with identified with moderate potential of causing violence in the election include Political parties (65%), INEC (62%), Party thugs (61%) and Insurgents (61%).

The study also highlighted the specific risk factors associated with each of these key actors. They are as follows:

Political Parties: The risk factors identified in their order of significance are: a) Undue Influence of money and god fathers (82%); b) Lack of training and corruption of party Agents (79%); c) Lack of transparency and disagreement over the selection of party officials and candidates (78%); d) Disorderly party rallies, processions and campaigns (75%); e) defection and carpet crossing (68%); f) Contentious Party Primaries and meetings (63%); h) Lack of respect for party rules (62%);

INEC: For INEC, the most pertinent risk factors identified by the study in their order of significance include: i) Partiality of INEC Officials (82%); ii) Problem of Underage Registration (73%); iii) Problems associated with the continuous Voter Registration exercise (69%); iv) Failure to prosecute Electoral Offenders (68%); v) Poor voter Education by INEC (65%); and vi) substitution of Trained Electoral Officials (64%).

Security Agencies: Security agencies emerged as the actor with the highest level of threats to the election. The most influential risk factors identified here, also in their order of importance, include: i) Partiality of Security Agents (80%); ii) Low Sense of Safety Among members of the Public (Banditry, Kidnapping, Assassinations, etc.) (80%); iii) Lack of Synergy between INEC and Security Agents (79%); iv) Poor Training and low Professionalism of Security Agents (78%); v) Lack of Synergy Among Security Agents (76%); vi) Problems Associated with the Deployment of Security Agents (75%); vii) Inadequate or excessive presence of Security Agents (74%); and viii) Aggressive and Excessive use of Force (72%). Evidently, all the identified risk factors but one ranked above 70%. This shows that special attention must be paid to the roles and activities of security agents throughout the electoral cycle.

The Judiciary: Regarding or in considering the role of the Judiciary to Election Violence in Kogi, the study reveals the following are most likely to lead to violence in the upcoming elections: i) Delays in the Handling of Pre-election cases (68%); ii) Confusing and Contradictory Court decisions (65%); iii) Partiality of the Judiciary (64%); iv) Capacity of the Judiciary (Including Inadequate of Judges) (59%); and lastly, v) Corruption and integrity of the Judiciary (54%). With these ratings, the judiciary would appear to be the actor with the lowest risk to the governorship election.

The Media: Lastly, assessing the role of the Media and Electoral violence in Kogi elections, the study reveals as follows: i) Broadcast and Publishing of hatred (76%); ii) Misinformation of the Public by the Media (72%); iii) Failure of Registration Bodies to ensure adherence to established Rules by the Media (69%); iv) Abuse of Social Media (64%); and v) Sensationalism and Provocation by the Media (63%). From these findings, the media also pose some measure of risks to the governorship election. It is arguably the next to security agents in terms of the weight ascribed to the risk factors.

C. Other Critical Electoral Risk Factors in Kogi State

The analysis also revealed some other critical electoral risk factors in the state based on the understanding of experts drawing across the academics, security agencies, mass media, etc. These factors include the following in their order of ranking: a) corruption among party officials (79%); b) political interference in the work of INEC (77%); c) the presence of strong opposition (73%); d) inadequate training and conduct of party agents (79%); e) adherence to process and procedures (90.4%); f) proliferation of small arms and light weapons (78%); g) inadequate training and conduct of security agents (72%); and i) abuse of power of incumbency (70%).

Other factors include INEC's information management (73%), relationships among federal, state and local governments (71%), legislative-executive relations at federal level (69%), involvement of informal political groups (61%), funding of elections (69%), problems associated with the recruitment and payment of election workers/adhoc staff (59%), reliability of election equipments (53%), and foreign interests and interference, including election observers (52%). All the risk factors were almost equally rated across the Eleven (11) LGAs of the state.

D. Overall Outlook of the Election

The outlook for a peaceful election was generally impressive. Specifically, (66%) of the respondents across the state expected the election to be peaceful. However, (17%) of the respondents expected the election to go the other way round. The other (17%) were undecided. When further interrogated about the expectation of the election, most of the respondents maintained their earlier position in terms of expectation of a peaceful election, though with a slight drop in the level of expectations of a peaceful election. Specifically, (51%) expected the election to either be ‘peaceful’ or ‘very peaceful’. However, (12%) of the respondents expected the election to be violent. The remaining (37%) were undecided. This shows some reasonable measure of consistency in the patter of responses to the first and the last questions on the survey instrument. Based on this popular perception, the Kogi governorship election should be largely peaceful, particularly in the West Senatorial districts and in large parts of the Central Senatorial districts.

Table 1: Expectation of a peaceful election in the state (%)

| 1. Do you agree that election in this area will be peaceful? | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | agree | 259 | 27.9 | 27.9 | 27.9 |
| | disagree | 94 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 38.0 |
| | Strongly agree | 357 | 38.5 | 38.5 | 76.5 |
| | Strongly disagree | 66 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 83.6 |
| | undecided | 152 | 16.4 | 16.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 928 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 2: Outcome of election in the state (%)

| 69. On the whole, how do you think that this election will go? | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Not Sure | 343 | 37.0 | 37.0 | 37.0 |
| | Peaceful | 255 | 27.5 | 27.5 | 64.4 |
| | Very Peaceful | 221 | 23.8 | 23.8 | 88.3 |
| | Very Violent | 53 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 94.0 |
| | Violent | 56 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 928 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

As Table one (1) indicates, some measure of consistency is noticeable. The decline in the expectations of peaceful election expressed in question 69 is expected. At that point, respondents had gone through all the questions and would have had their expectations mediated by the contents and substance of the intervening questions.

There were, however, discrepancies across the Twelve (12) out of Seventeen (17) LGAs effectively covered in the state. With respect to the first question, expectations of a peaceful elections were rated over 60% in Twelve (12) of the LGAs, with only Ogori Magongo and Kogi standing at 87% and 28% respectively. However, the positive ranking fluctuated up and down with respect to Q69. Specifically, level of expectations remains positive in above 50% rating in Eight (8) of the LGAs, namely Bassa, Dekina, Igalamela; Kogi, Ofu, Ogori Magongo, Omala, and Yagba West. While a downward trend was noticeable across these Nine LGAs, Kogi was exceptional, rising from 28% in Q1 to 52% in Q69. Again, the decline in Ibaji, Idah, Ijumu, and Mopamuru were too sharp, falling from 68% in Q1 to 0% in Q69.

1. Table 3: Expectations of a Violent Election by LGAs (%)

| LGAs | Q1 | Q69 | Risk Level Status (Average of Q1 & Q69) Key: 0-9%(Green), 10-19%(Amber), 20% and above(Red) |
|-----------------|------|------|--|
| Adavi | 15.5 | 0 | 7.75 |
| Bassa | 36.7 | 5.0 | 13.9 |
| Dekina | 20 | 18.6 | 9.65 |
| Ibaji | 3.3 | 0 | 3.3 |
| Idah | 0 | 83.3 | 83.3 |
| Igalamela Odolu | 31.3 | 26.6 | 28.95 |
| Ijumu | 23.8 | 20.4 | 11.05 |
| Kabba Bunu | 3.5 | 2.3 | 2.9 |
| Kogi | 48.0 | 0 | 24 |
| Lokoja | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mopamuro | 11.9 | 0 | 11.9 |
| Ofu | 14.9 | 33.3 | 12.05 |
| Ogori/Magongo | 11.7 | 3.9 | 5.2 |
| Okene | 13.3 | 11.5 | 12.4 |
| Omala | 13.5 | 9.9 | 7.8 |
| Yagba East | 13.4 | 12.5 | 6.48 |
| Yagba West | 19.6 | 9.9 | 7.37 |
| Olamaboro | | | Data missing |
| Ankpa | | | Not covered |
| Okehi | | | Not covered |
| Ajaokuta | | | Not covered |

As can be gleaned from Table 3, the data suggests the prospects of a very peaceful election in Eight (8) LGAs. These are Adavi, Ibaji, Kabba Bonu, Lokoja, Ogori/Magongo, Omala, Yagba East and Yagba West. While moderately peaceful election with a high risk of violence are in Six other LGAs. These are Bassa (13), Dekina (9), Ijumu (11), Mopamuru (12), Ofu (12), and Okene (12); and The most violent election are in three (3) LGAs, namely Idah, Igalamela, and Kogi.

Overall, the data above suggest the prospects of a peaceful election in two senatorial districts of the state (West and central) of the state. These six others tend to portray a worryingly low level of expectations of a peaceful election especially Bassa, Mopamoru, Ofu, and Okene on the edge. They deserve greater attentions, alongside the most violent prone zones of the East Senatorial Districts of the state.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The following findings, among others, were obtained from the information generated from this study:

1. With respect to the expectation of a peaceful election, the result of the survey shows that majority of the respondents in Kogi state are optimistic that the election will be peaceful. This highly emphasises the perceptions of respondents from Kogi Central (82%) than Kogi East and West at 60% respectively. Nevertheless, the responses on the prospect of peaceful elections show that the general political ambience with respect to peaceful conduct of the forthcoming election is very uncertain, but at best could be peaceful in all Senatorial district.
2. The survey reveals that hate speech could precipitate electoral violence in the state as indicated by the respondents. However, there is slight difference in the opinion of respondents in all three senatorial district, as the respondents in Kogi East and West respectively, who strongly agreed that hate speech can lead to violent election also have other contrary views who are in the slight minority group that hate speech may not lead to violence.
3. The study also reveals that across the state, the respondents are of the perceptions that inter-ethnic/religious and communal conflicts could be sources of violence during the election as indicated by majority of the respondents, while a small fraction disagreed and another little fraction of the group were undecided. This suggests that there are existing inter-ethnic/religious and communal conflicts in the senatorial district that may likely escalate during the elections and precipitate electoral violence.
4. The survey also exhibits the fact that Troublesome Politicians, Political Parties, Leaders, and Candidates are very likely to cause violence during elections in the Kogi state November, 2019 as indicated by a sum majority response of total the respondents. There is general gender vertical agreement to this perception. Majority of the respondents across the three senatorial district agree that troublesome politicians, political parties, leaders and candidates are likely to cause electoral violence in the state.
5. The study revealed that majority of the respondents hold the view that widespread availability and use of hard drugs could precipitate electoral violence in the state November 2019 election. This opinion is also held by gender respondents. Kogi Central and East senatorial districts topped states where the widespread use and abuse of hard drugs is noticeable and expressed, which could influence electoral violence in the state.

6. There is expressed overall disenchantment with the government as well as with the electoral process that could lead to electoral violence in the state November elections as indicated by majority of the respondents and some very few disagreements while only a tiny fraction were undecided. This view is shared by majority of the respondents irrespective of gender, and senatorial district and locality. The Kogi state respondents believe that citizen disaffection with the electoral process could result in electoral violence by number, especially around the issues of non-payments of salary arrears.
7. The groups that have the most likelihood of causing electoral violence are, political party thugs, political parties, insurgents, religious extremists, security agencies, and cultists and other armed groups, while the pan-ethnic groups and civil society organisations respectively were considered by respondents as a group that is less likely to constitute threat to electoral violence.
8. In relation to party politics, the survey shows that several factors such as influence of money and godfathers, disorderly party rallies, contentious party conventions, lack of respect for party rules, lack of training and corruption of party agents, and defections, among others, can cause electoral violence for Kogi state. However, "undue influence of money and godfathers" was listed as the topmost causative factors of electoral violence.
9. In relation to election management, the problems with the distribution, location and adequacy of polling units; partiality of INEC officials; movement and distributions of election materials; INECs overall preparedness; poor voter education by INEC were some of the most pronounced management issues that respondents believe could cause electoral violence in all four states.
10. Findings of the study on security agencies and the likelihood of electoral violence indicates that respondents from Kogi state are in agreement that "poor training and low professionalism of security agents", "partiality of security agents", "Lack of synergy between INEC and security agents", "low sense of safety among members of the public" and "lack of synergy among security agencies" are more likely to cause violence during elections in the states than any other actions associated with security agents. More respondents from Kogi East than any of the other two district are of the view that partiality of security agents and aggressive or excessive use of force are more likely to cause violence during elections.
11. In terms of the actions of the judiciary leading to electoral violence especially, the study threw-up concerns in the order presented as arising from corruption and integrity of the judiciary; capacity of the judiciary; confusing and contradictory court decisions; partiality of the judiciary; and delays in the handling of pre-election cases.
12. The survey reveals that the media can contribute to the outbreak of electoral violence in the state, and this would be the case if the media is implicated in issues such as misinformation of the public, broadcast and publishing of hatred; partisanship, favouritism and partiality; failure of regulatory bodies to ensure adherence to established rules;

sensationalism and provocation; lack of professionalism and finally Abuse of social media and unequal access to media.

POLICY AND PROGRAMMING IMPLICATIONS

13. Building coalition of network of partnership that would ensure secured elections;
14. Police are not to be seen as the sole proprietors of security during elections, rather we should encourage inter-agency collaborations in matters of elections;
15. The Local Government Areas are often the theatres of violence and conflicts, hence emphases should be placed on them and what role can the authority play in mitigation and early warning;
16. Creating framework for advocacy and sensitisation of the Public, INEC staff, Security Agencies and allied partners;
17. Adopting a template of ethical behaviours by Politicians and Parties
18. Evolving measure that would enhance internal democracies in political parties
19. Special capacity building on elections for the Judiciary and strengthening of the processes
20. General ethical discussion about the ethos and values of democratic values and culture across all spectrums of society
21. Democratic values to attain agenda status rather than regional and restructuring discuss in national life
22. Ensuring adequate and early funding of INEC to allow for better planning and deployment for elections
23. Over all capacity building for all sectors involving civil societies and other cross platform organisations to ensure transparency and openness of the electoral process.
24. Evolving a charter for a violence free election all across all stakeholders with roles and responsibilities clearly defined.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

- i. There is the need to ensure effective monitoring of the media, particularly, online social media platforms, in other to mitigate emotionally sensitive statements such hate speech's, ethnically sensitive states and more that are likely to trigger ethno-religious violence, regional sentiments and more during elections. A special and great attention should be focused on policies and laws regulating self/individual publishing on all online platforms in Nigeria to contain and manage hate speech and other emotive sentiments that mar or make elections violent
- j. Idleness and poverty are among the youth contributes to their vulnerability to drug abuse and manipulation into causing electoral violence. Government at all levels should embark of effective job creation to reduce the number of unemployed youths who partly out of frustration engage in drug trafficking and consumption.

- k. Ahead of the elections. The security agencies are to be encouraged to engage in multi-agency research and mapping exercise that discreetly identifies hotspots of drug use and abuses by identifying their networks, routes and actors that pursue hard drug trafficking and smuggling in the region.
- l. Political parties should develop and sign Peace Commitment Charter (PCC). Through the Charter, through this charters, the political parties shall embark on their traditional role of socio-political orientation, awareness and conscientisation of the electorate to embrace peace and shun violence.
- m. There is the need for training of some key stakeholders to ensure and enhance professionalism and accountability in the discharge of their election duties. The training should focus on high factor stakeholders to include INEC Staff, media practitioners, security agents, civil society groups, by acquainting them with the skills, experiences and wider appreciation of their responsibilities before, during and after elections to avoid the manifestation of violence.
- n. All the media outlets and outfits are to be made to adopt ethical codes that ensures they commit to promoting impartial news and documentary reporting on the entire electoral process, to guarantee and ensure the integrity of the elections and foster unity and confidence among all political stakeholders.
- o. The need for Advocacy on Nigerian Political parties to adapt the ideals and principles of internal democracy in terms of the elections of party officials and candidates to carry the flag of the party. Most fundamental is for Political parties to adapt the global fundamental principles of inclusive politics in spectrum of fair representation of gender, religion, age category, and locality.
- p. All levels of Government in Nigeria: the federal, state and local government must evolve framework and processes that are capable of managing people's expectations in the coming elections through effective and efficient service delivery, as well as a strategic communication to ensure that electoral technical hitches are not misinterpreted as attempts to favour a particular party or candidate in the elections.

CONCLUSION

This survey assessed the potential risk factors that are likely to cause electoral violence in Kogi State, North Central Nigeria, with field evidence drawn from survey responses in all the three senatorial districts of the State. The state is presently experiencing intense intra and inter party rivalries, which has remained very prominent amongst only two dominant political parties of the ruling APC and the PDP. Within the background of this is the intense inter-ethnic/religious and communal conflicts that tends to add to the confusion between what can be either termed as political and what may also be limited to purely ethnicity. These dividing lines are often blurred, what may be termed political tension and crisis often gets marred in ethnic, religious and communal conflicts, given the complex heterogeneous nature of societies in Kogi State. For

Instance, in Kogi State, the Igala's predominate in the Kogi East Senatorial Zone, the Igbira's dominate in Kogi Central and the West by the Okuns, that's the Yoruba's in the state.

All of the political tensions drawn at the intersection of ethnicity, tribalism, religious etc tends to create tension, crisis and conflicts that is very likely increase the challenges political and security temperature ahead of the November, 2019 general elections. As observed elsewhere in other parts of the country, there are several risk factors that are potential trigger of electoral violence and are likely to undermine the credibility of the November, 2019 elections. The findings of this study in Kogi state suggest that factors such as past history of violence for instance in Kogi East and central; intense hate speech prominent in all the senatorial zones; the potential of the dynamics of local conflicts being transposed into election violence especially in Kogi East and central spiralling into the less volatile West is very likely.

A major feature in election violence is the likelihood of troublesome politicians, political parties and leaders exacerbating election violence; particularly in Kogi East and Central being the most populous also and a major attractions to the role of participation of illegal immigrants in elections likely to lead to election violence; citizen dissatisfaction with government in Kogi state especially over non-payments of Salaries, availability and use of hard drug the state; ambiguous electoral laws in Kogi, are potential sources of election violence.

Accordingly, the youths, ethnic minorities, women, elderly, political parties, INEC, political thugs, the media, security agencies, extremist religious, cultist and other armed groups and the judiciary among others, could cause electoral violence if adequate steps and processes in these states are not taken to prevent or manage such risk factors. In conclusion, there is the urgent need to evolve and implement steps that would ensure the prevention of manifestation of the factors that are likely to lead to the outbreak of electoral violence and measures that would whittle down their effects in society.