

DAILY

BULLETIN

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A LOT OF WORK NEEDED TO ACHIEVE EXPANSION OF VOTER ACCESS TO PUs – INEC CHAIRMAN

As the implementation of the expansion of Voter Access to Polling Units commences across the country with the field exercises and verification, Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Professor Mahmud Yakubu, has undertaken an on-the-spot assessment of progress made so far in parts of the FCT and also Nasarawa state.

Professor Yakubu led a team from the Commission’s Headquarters to the Life-camp, and Apo Legislative Quarters areas of the FCT, as well as parts of Karu in Nasarawa state. He expressed satisfaction with the progress made so far, even as he admitted that there is a lot of work to be done to decongest Polling units and bring them closer to the people.

Addressing Journalists in the course of the tour, the INEC Chairman said “the purpose of the visit is the verification that the Commission is embarking on. All the National Commissioners are out, visiting the states of the Federation to verify the work of converting the voting points to polling units. So, we decided from the Headquarters to visit some of the polling units and voting points in the FCT and also Karu in Nasarawa State”.

He continued “I have to verify that the right thing is being done, converting those voting points to polling units and relocating them in line with the Commission’s guidelines.

So far, I’ve done the FCT, we are now in Karu. Recall that as part of our engagement with stakeholders, we showed images of one of the congested Polling Units in the country from Karu in Nasarawa State, one of the overcrowded Polling Units in the High Court area which is not far

from here. We are on our way to the one or two places where they relocated those voting points. We have the opportunity to see that”.

According to Prof. Yakubu, so far, in Karu LGA, 395 Voting Points have been converted to Polling Units in Karu Local Government of Nasarawa state to avoid the congestion of Polling Units experienced in the 2019 general election....I’ve been assured that they have converted in the whole Karu local government, about 395 Voting Points to Polling Units. So, we are expanding access for voters. When we commence Voter Registration on Monday, the 28th of June, we will give citizens the opportunity to choose among the new locations. Our hope is that we will not see this kind of congestion again in future elections”.

The INEC Chairman hinted that expansion of voter access to Polling Units would be a continuous process going forward, as the need arises. His words “what we have done, basically, is to build on what we did in 2019. Recall that we are converting the Voting Points used for the 2019 elections into Polling Units, autonomous Polling Units while relocating some. This is going to be a continuous process. One exercise will not solve the problem, but we hope we have established the mechanism that going forward, the commission will be adjusting the number of Polling Units as the number of registered voters increases”.

National Commissioner Supervising the North Central states, Mohammed Kudu Haruna, who accompanied the INEC Chairman on the assessment tour said the Commission planned to hold a stakeholders meeting at the end of the verification exercise, in order to harvest peoples views and to help the Commission improve on its work.

The National Commissioner buttressed the earlier point made by the Chairman that the CVR exercise would afford citizens the opportunity to choose their preferred Polling Unit, with the conversion of existing Voting Points to autonomous Polling Units.

The Assessment entourage led by the INEC Chairman was received by the INEC FCT Resident Electoral Commissioner, Alh. Yahaya Bello and other staff of at the FCT office during the tour of FCT Polling Units, while the Resident Electoral Commissioner for Nasarawa, Dr. Uthman Ajidagba led the team to receive the INEC Chairman in his domain.

Also on the Chairman's entourage for the assessment tour were his Technical Assistants, Directors, and other Directing staff from the Headquarters.

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