

Monday 6th February 2023

This report documents incidents of hate speech, malicious propagation of fake news, violence and other forms of elections-related atrocities for the week of **Monday 30 January - Sunday 5 February 2023**

Preamble

With just 19 days left until #NigeriaDecides 2023, incidents of electoral violence are on the increase. In the week of 30 January to 5 February 2023, our tracking of election violence, hate speech and fake news records an increased rate of the use of hate speech by political actors and their supporters with at least 19 incidents of political violence resulting in 25 deaths and 2 abductions. Particularly concerning is that most of these incidents occurred in the Southeast region.

Attacks on INEC and Security Personnel / Facilities

- 1. February 1, 2023:** military Officers engaged Biafra agitators in a gun battle when they blocked the road around Eke-Ụtụtu market, Orsu, Imo.
- 2. January 30, 2023:** armed men attacked the Ebube-Agu security office in Umuogudu Akpu Ngbo Ohaukwu LGA, Ebony State, resulting in the injury of 2 personnel, destruction of properties, and theft of ammunition.
- 3. February 2, 2023:** gunmen attacked Nnobi Police station at Idemili South, Anambra State, resulting in the death of 16 years old boy and injury of a young girl of about 15 years who sustained bullet wounds (1 killed)
- 4. February 1, 2023:** gunmen attacked and set fire to the INEC office at Ojoto, Idemili South Local Government Area, destroying parts of the building and some non-essential materials for the forthcoming general election.
- 5. February 1, 2023:** gunmen attacked and burnt Anambra State Vigilante Group (AVG) office and a magistrate court at Amaichi, Nnewi South, Anambra South.
- 6. February 3, 2023:** gunmen attacked a joint patrol team of the Njikoka Strike Force and Anambra State Vigilante Group, Abagana, killing 2 members of the Njikoka Strike Force, a member of the AVG, Abagana and a tricycle operator.. (4 killed)
- 7. January 31, 2023:** the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), of Naka Police Division, Superintendent, SP, Mamud Abubakar and 7 others were killed in a gun battle with gunmen at Makurdi-Naka Road, Naka town, in Benue state. (8 killed)
- 8. February 3, 2023:** Judge Nnaemeka Ugboma was killed by gunmen at Ejemekwuru Customary Court in Oguta LGA, Imo State. (1 killed).

Attacks on Politically Exposed Persons

- 1. February 4, 2023:** gunmen set ablaze the home and properties of Imo Labour Party House of Assembly candidate, Nnaemeka Obiaraeri, at Amagu Ihube, Imo State.

2. February 3, 2023: gunmen attacked the convoy of APGA Ebonyi state Governorship candidate, Prof. Benard Odoh along the Enugu/Abakaliki expressway killing his driver, and leaving others injured. (1 killed)

3. February 2, 2023: a PDP senatorial candidate for Ebonyi South was attacked at a rally in Uburu Ohaozara local Government.

4. February 3, 2023: The residence of the Kaduna Labour Party House of Representatives Candidate, Suleiman Tambaya at Guru Village was attacked leading to the death of 2 persons. (2 killed)

5. February 4, 2023: The 2 wives and 5 children of the Taraba Monarch, HRH Sani Mohammed were that were abducted on January 19, 2023 were executed by their abductors.(7 killed)

Abductions

In the last week, at least 2 people were abducted. The specifics are as follows;

1. January 31, 2023: Gunmen attacked APC rally and Abducted the Rivers state APC Campaign Director, Boma Brown at Opobo/Nkoro, Opobo LGA, Rivers state. (1 abducted).

2. February 1, 2023: The new Commissioner of Women Affairs in Cross River, Prof. Getrude Njar, was abducted at Mayne Avenue, South Council, Cross River state. (1 abducted).

Incidences of Hate Speech

1. January 31, 2023: The APC Presidential Candidate, Bola Ahmed Tinubu claimed the Labour Party Presidential Candidate was the Biblical Peter that denied Jesus Christ three times before the cock crowed. The statement was made at the APC Presidential Campaign rally at Awka, Anambra state.

2. January 30, 2023: Bola Ahmed Tinubu during his campaigns in Akwa Ibom state called out the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Udom Emmanuel for supporting the Presidential candidate of his party, the PDP, and referred to him as “that boy” in a statement where he was attributed to have said “Akwa Ibom, that boy that brought Atiku here, who calls himself Governor, tell him enough is enough. He lives in my backyard in Lagos. If not that we are friends, I would have driven him home.”

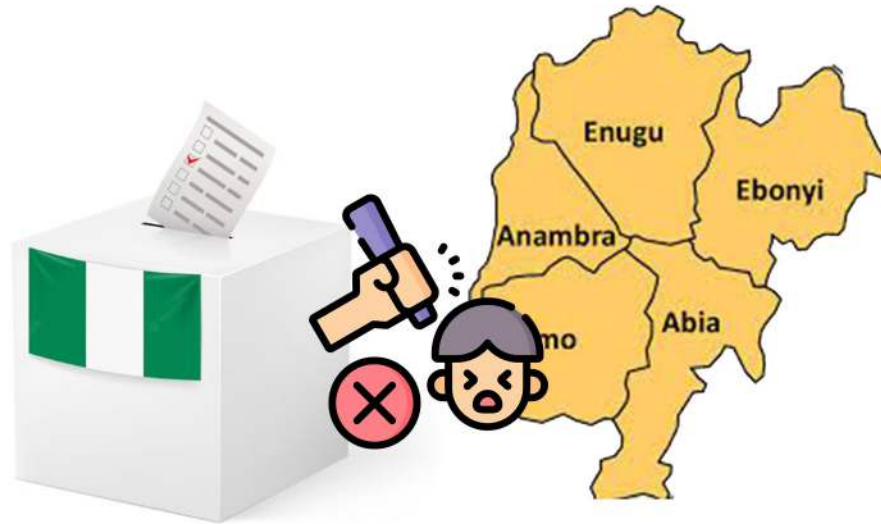
3. February 2, 2023: The Kaduna State Governor, Nasir El-Rufai referred to the Labour Party Presidential candidate as a “Nollywood actor, and that is all he will be” The Kaduna State Governor, Nasiru El-Rufai, uttered this statement while in an interview with TVC

4. January 30, 2023: in Enugu State, a group of youths invited to Arthur Eze residence for a rally resorted to name-calling and burning of campaign materials of PDP presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar.

The Impact of Reported Election Atrocities on the Civic Space

With the rising rate of voter intimidation, citizens are wary of attending political gatherings and identifying with particular political parties. Political elites who were previously considered to be ‘untouchables’ and highly protected are frequently been attacked with some of them losing their lives and having their properties destroyed. The threats that “there would be no election in Biafra land” supposedly made by one of the IPOB leaders is also creating unrest as people in the Southeast are very aware and have witnessed firsthand the havoc that the group under the leadership of Simon Ekpa has caused in the past.

Conclusion



South East

The increasing level of political violence across the country, especially in the southeast region is alarming and requires urgent attention from the authorities. The frequent use of hate speech by politicians also instigates the rise of attacks on politically exposed persons.



INCIDENT CENTRE FOR ELECTION ATROCITIES

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