

ELECTORAL VIOLENCE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: IDENTIFYING HOT-SPOTS IN THE 2011 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

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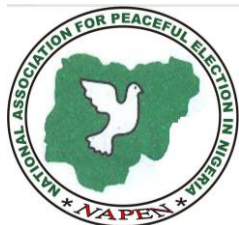


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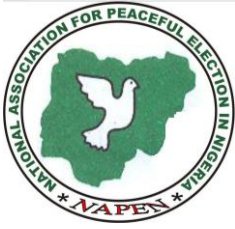
Introduction:

Nigeria is a heterogeneous country with diverse and overlapping regional, religious, and ethnic divisions. Nigerian culture is as diverse as its population, which is estimated to be around 150 million. With the regaining of political process in 1999 after over thirty (30) years of military rule, Nigeria looked set for a return to stability and the regaining of its position in the committee of nations particularly in Africa. Wrongly so, this was not to be.

Since the 1999 to the 2007 elections, the Nigeria electoral and political landscape has fallen from par to below par and has moved from violence to greater violence. The level and magnitude of electoral and political violence has risen and the political elites have often converted poverty ridden unemployed Nigerian youths into readymade machinery for the perpetration of electoral violence. This is linked to the political system and institution that in theory has failed to political participation and in practice has seen the political elites forming bulk of the sponsors and perpetrators of electoral violence.

An examination of the political antecedents reveals evidence of political and electoral violence in Nigeria before 1999. There were repeated scales of violence and political and/or religious rift between the Christian and Muslim on the one side and North and South on the other side. Cases of Kano Riot, Jos crisis amongst others are still fresh in our memory. According to Campbell, this has often resulted to sectarian violence with particular reference to the geographical centre formerly called the middle belt and the Niger Delta (Campbell, 2010). The pattern of violence in the former is such that cut across political, sectarian and electoral, while in the latter, the activities of the militant (so called freedom fighters) transcends just the struggle for the control of the resources to include both covert and overt participation in perpetrating electoral violence.

The configuration of the Nigeria political system falls along six geopolitical zones namely: the North viz: the North-West comprising Kaduna, Katsina, Jigawa, Sokoto, Kebbi, Kano, and Zamfara; the North-East comprising Bauchi, Gombe, Borno, Taraba, Adamawa and Yobe; the North Central comprising Plateau, Nassarawa, Niger, Kwara, Kogi and Benue. In the South, the geopolitical configurations are the South-West comprising Lagos, Osun, Ogun, Oyo,



Ekiti and Ondo; the South-East comprising Enugu, Anambra, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi and the South-South comprising Rivers, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Delta Edo and Bayelsa. None of these zones is spared from possibility of electoral violence nonetheless; the trigger, machinery and strategy employed might differ and the remote cause may as well vary across zones and states.

This paper is structured into four chapters. The first chapter examined the concept of electoral violence while chapter two examines the universal context of electoral violence. Chapter three paid attention to exploring electoral violence in Nigeria and chapter four maps out zonal hot spots for electoral violence and then concludes.



Chapter One:

1.0 Electoral Violence:

Researches on electoral violence is scarce and often times focuses broadly with a mixture political and electoral violence. However some scholars have made attempt to conceptualise electoral violence. Fischer defined electoral violence (conflict) as any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced “protection,” blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination (Fischer, 2002). Igbuzor views it as

“any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including pre, during and post election periods, and may include any of the following acts: thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral process or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with electoral processes”(Igbuzor, 2010)

The work of Fischer culminated into a comprehensive research by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) on electoral violence, which later set the state for the Electoral Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) project that has been implemented in countries across continents including Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Guyana, Iraq, East-Timo and Nigeria. The EVER project is currently been implemented in Nigeria and it presents a comprehensive and robust understanding of the context and concept of electoral violence. Within the EVER framework therefore election-related violence refers to

“any violence (harm) or threat of violence (harm) that is aimed at any person or property involved in the election process, or at disrupting any part of the electoral or political process during the election period”(International Foundation for Election Systems, 2011).

The three definitions are closely related captures the stages of electoral violence as well as the act the makeup electoral violence. The crucial thing is that the definitions reveal the deeper nature of electoral violence in a way that readers would understand that electoral violence is much more than Election Day violence or overt manifestation of violence during election period. It



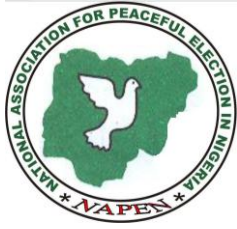
transcends that to capture the election stages and can be a harm or threat to harm to the electoral process.

Election violence generally involves political parties, their supporters, journalists, agents of the government, election administrators and the general population, and includes threats, assault, murder, destruction of property, and physical or psychological harm (International Foundation for Election Systems, 2011; Fischer, 2002). This is closely related to the conceptualization of political and electoral related violence in a cross country study of post World War 11 political violence, in which Hibbs (1973) took a broader approach to capture the entire periods of election process. By these definitions, electoral violence must involve specific victim(s), perpetrator(s) and occurs within a time frame and location. Electoral violence also comes with motive(s) and the victims can be people, places, things or data. This presupposes that electoral violence cuts across different stages of election starting from the registration period to post election period. Fischer (2002) highlighted four descriptive categories of conflict and violence that emerge, suggesting a variety of motives, perpetrators, and victims which includes the following.

- i. Disgruntled voters against the state arising from perceived unfairness in the election process
- ii. The state in conflict with voters who challenges election result or hegemony of the state
- iii. Political rivals in conflict with each other in the quest to attain power and
- iv. A combination of two or more of the above categories

1.1 Stages of Electoral Violence:

Electoral violence can occur at different stages in the election process starting pre election period (registration) to post election period (after results). The crucial thing is for the monitors to understand deeply the context and concept of electoral violence for easy and comprehensive reporting of incidents in a way that will capture incidents across the stages without neglecting any stage.



1.1.1 Pre-Election Period:

Pre- Election Day violence can occur during registration period and can lead to massive disenfranchisement of voters due to psychological fear. This can in turn threaten the very target of achieving free and fair election in any political system. Irregularities in voters register, blurred identity, and poor technical quality might lead to void registration and subsequently denials of voting right. This not only disenfranchises the voters but is also a trigger to bigger scale violence on the Election Day. Disenfranchised voters who felt disgruntled about the process might result to descriptive category (i) as captured by Fischer as a pay back to the state.

1.1.2 Campaign Period:

Campaign period is also a prominent stage with high tendency for electoral violence. The manifestation is mostly during campaigns, political meeting and rallies. It can be intra and/or inter party conflict. In the Nigerian context, the deployment of thugs and cults groups to attack opponents and/or supporters of opponents is usually the case. This is done with the intention to intimidate opponents and send psychological fear to potential voters.

1.1.3 Election Day Violence Result Conflict

Election Day violence also constitutes electoral violence. Often times, people have misconstrued electoral violence as Election Day violence. In fact, this is one of the stages. Prominent in the list of Election Day violence includes burning of election offices and material including ballot boxes and papers, intimidation of voters, snatching of ballot boxes, rigging and diversion of election materials. In stable democracies with contingency plans, alternative means of voting might readily be available but new democracies like Nigeria is prone to set back in such cases.

1.1.4 Post Election/Result Conflict

Electoral violence can also occur hours and days after elections. This can emanate from dispute over election results and the inability of judiciary system to handle election dispute fairly. Post result violence might occur where the judiciary is perceived to be partial. This might lead to low level of confidence on the judicial system by the candidates and as such would prefer taking laws



into the hands than wasting time in a corruptible judicial system. The frustration and fear of partial judgement then leads them with the hard option of electoral violence. This can also lead to higher scale violence beyond elections. Fischer noted that the manner in which election result are announced might also lead to electoral violence and in some cases lead to targeting of setting group or ethnic origin in a multiethnic society(Fischer, 2002).

1.2 Objectives

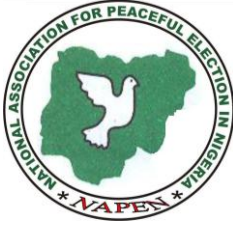
The broad objective of this research report is to contribute to building sustainable democracy in Nigeria through credible elections. The main objectives are:

- To identify potential hot-spots in the lead up to the 2011 elections
- To guide EVER monitors in identifying trends and
- To guide EVER monitors on reporting electoral violence incidents and

1.3 Data Collection, Analysis & Limitations

Data for this report was mainly collected through secondary methods. We relied on data from journal articles, reports and official documents. Other sources are national newspapers across Nigeria which was followed consistently during the period of this report and radio and television news and well reports and commentary on the political and election situation in Nigeria.

In the analysis, we employed descriptive qualitative approach and focused longitudinal at the process underlying events and how they lead to specific outcomes. The report borrowed the pattern matching and explanation building of data analysis(Yin, 2003, pp. 116-122). Therefore we relied on comparing empirical based pattern of occurrence of electoral violence in states, zones and Nigeria. Hence, pattern that coincides then leads to outcomes and predictions. In trying to arrive to the logic of pattern, explanation building was employed to show how electoral events lead to outcomes. Further, indicator colours of **Red**, **Yellow** and **Green** are used to indicate high, moderate and low risks respectively. This was borrowed from the traffic light signals where red indicates danger, yellow the midpoint and green as safety. This research is limited by the fact that there was over reliance on secondary data. The time frame for the research and the



resources available did not give time to gathering of primary data through interviews and/or direct observation of events.

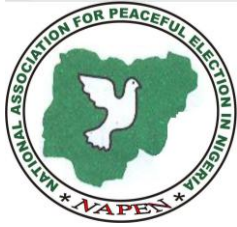
Chapter Two

2.0 Electoral Violence: Universal Context

In every democracy, election is the essential ingredient that allows transition from one regime to the other. It is the means and process by which the electorate decide who and which group administers the affairs of the country based upon their perceived conviction on the agenda and programme presented by the group¹. In every electoral process there are always groups popularly called political parties except in highly despotic military regimes. Even in one party system, there is still group formation with existence of intra-party politics. Invariably competition is part and parcel of democracy and it strengthens the quality and level of service to the people. Election therefore is an indispensable part of any political system; nonetheless, it can also involve explicit or implicit use of violence in the contestation either by the political parties contesting the elections themselves or outside agents like the military, labor unions or private militias(Chaturvedi, 2005). However, Chaturvedi warned that electoral violence and the use of force undermines the whole essence of democracy, which rests on freedom, expression and choice.

The use of violence in elections is not peculiar to recent and emerging democracies in the developing world. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century England and America, there were

¹ Political manifesto is the programme of a political party that outlines the plan and strategy to achieving the plan.



documented cases of electoral violence in which force and intimidation were used as a tactical means of winning elections (Seymour and Frary, 1918). However, new democracies are currently leading on cases of electoral violence as highlighted in the case of India and Sri Lanka (Austin, 1994), and also the cases of Kenya, Zimbabwe and Madagascar (Chaturvedi, 2005). Electoral violence is capable of swinging the pendulum of election results create political unrest and as a result instability and slow pace of development. Two separate papers, showed how threat to electoral violence initiated political parties' influence on voting behaviours and subsequently policy outcome (Ellman and Wantchekon, 2000; Wantchekon, 1999).

In today's world, election is serving great purpose both in war torn, authoritarian as well as democratic societies. It services as a means of transition from bitter experiences of war to civility in former war torn states. It provides opportunity for freedom in previous authoritarian regimes and offer citizens the space to free expression. It offer a government a unique opportunity for legitimacy and is also a recognised way of building trust in former authoritarian states and also a way to validate negotiated political pacts (Brown, 2003; Sisk, 2008) Election also serves as a transitory process in stable democracies and a way of strengthening an already assumed perfect system.

On the other hand, because of the freedom associated with election and momentum it generates, it thus allows individuals, groups and parties to use words and/or actions that are capable of intimidating, coercing, humiliation or causing even bodily harm to the electorate. Moreso, because elections provide the space whereby people retain, regain and usurp power and also the space to highlight social differentiation of individual and party opponents. Therefore, players tap into the deep vulnerability created by such interaction to create violence. Sisk (2008)



warned that negative expression of social differentiation is likely to lead to extreme clash between opposition supporters as witnessed in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Colombia, Guyana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Zimbabwe. Such tendencies can lead to high scale violable and bring a country to near level of terrorism and un-governability. It can also lead to proliferation of small arms because more often, the machinery for perpetrating election violence are mostly unemployed youths, which thereafter resort the use of those arms for other social vices. Legitimacy of any government also depends on the acceptability of the election outcome by all parties. Thus, a free and fair imbues in the government the confidence and legitimacy to working towards improving the capacity of the state to ensure human development through effective service delivery. However, when on the contrary and based upon false or forces legitimacy, the reverse might as well be the case. Ivory Coast is the nearest memory in mind.

Election provides the platform for debate, persuasion and common rules for choosing representatives of the people who can serve in executive, legislative, and other institutions of government. Elections are in this sense a critical means of social conflict management through peaceful deliberations and decision-making processes in which parties abides by the pre-election promises and the loser given the opportunity to provide constructive criticism as the opposition or merely await till the next election period. In this case therefore, election becomes in the word of Robert Dahl, a mutual security pact (Dahl, 1973) and operates with the consistent consent of elites under conditions of bound uncertainty (Przeworski, 1991, p. 12). In a paper prepared for the International Studies Association Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California in 2008, Sisk(2008) highlighted election as two sides of the same coin proving voice and legitimacy when

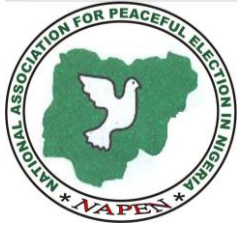


the process is followed and all stakeholders adhere to the agreed framework and processes and also a violence induced factor when on the contrary particularly in fragile states (Sisk, 2008, pp. 2-3).

Chapter Three

3.0 Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Historical Perspective

Since the attainment of independence in October 1 1960, Nigerian political system has been synonymous with political and electoral violence. The first election was in 1964, four years after the country's attainment of independence. The election was marred by boycotts, malpractice and violence. The Nigerian National Alliance won a large majority in the election after the main opposition grouping, the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA), refused to take part. A supplementary election held in the Eastern Region in March 1965 led to the UPGA winning every seat. The widespread violence and level of electoral malpractices witnessed in the 1964/5 election angered some section of the Nigerian military who felt that the civilians were not ready for democratic rule. Sadly, this led to the January 1966 coup that controversially installed General Aguiyi Ironsi as the Military Head of State. His government was short lived after a counter coup that installed General Yakubu Gowon as the Head of State. The religious and ethnic controversy surrounding both coups is not the focus of the paper. However Nigerian path towards democracy started on rough edges and in 1975, another military coup ousted the regime of Yakubu Gowon and enthroned Murtala/Obasanjo regime which eventually gave Nigerians an election that elected President Shehu Shagari on October 1 1979. But the military were not yet finished and on December 31 1983; the eve of January 1 1984 Major General Buhari became the



Head of State through another coup. This time the brazen corruption, the economic mismanagement, and the inept leadership of civilians provided the grounds for military intervention. Indeed, conditions had deteriorated so much in the Second Republic that when the coup came, it was more or less widely acclaimed in Nigeria. Buhari's regime brought some level of discipline into the Nigerian system but eventually succumbed to another military coup orchestrated by General Babangida on August 27, 1985. Babangida was a dictator and had no intention of handing over to the civilian and his false attempts to usher Nigeria into a new political dispensation proved abortive after his annulment of June 12, 1993 election. However exactly eight months from his military usurpation of power on August 27 1993, he formed the interim national government headed by Ernest Shonekan, after mountains of domestic and international pressure. Shonekan was overthrown in what was regarded as peaceful coup on November 17 1993 by General Sani Abacha until his demise on June 8 1998. The military transition and baton was peacefully handed over to General Abdulsalami Abubakar who then ushered Nigeria into the new dawn in May 29 1999.

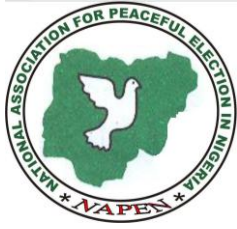
The above circles of coups and counter coups are important to highlight the history of political violence in Nigerian and the inherent nature electoral violence in Nigerian political life. The immediate election after independence was shrouded in ethnicity, rancour, violent, greed and selfishness. This to a very large extent underscored the repeated cases of electoral violence in Nigeria from 1999 to 2007. The June 12 1993 election which was internationally acclaimed as free and fair was annulled because of vested interests. Aside the 1993 election, Nigeria has never had any other peaceful election devoid of violence and other electoral vices, which is the reason behind the difficulty in coming to terms with free and fair elections in Nigeria. Presumably,



Nigeria electoral system is synonymous with violence since electoral violence has formed part of the Nigeria electoral culture. Nigerian politicians are habituated to fraud, corruption, intimidation, and violence and consider violence the necessary weapons for political success. Onwudiwe and Berwind-Dart (2010), noted that it denies the opportunity to credibly elect their leaders.

Since the rebirth of democracy in 1999, Nigeria still struggles for a credible election recognised internationally. Even though the enthronement of democracy in 1999 has provided space for civil society engage with the politicians and the electoral bodies, Nigerian electoral system is still void. Elections in Nigerian attract variants degrees of electoral violence and the electoral law is very calm about it despite the wider implication of the political process. The level of financial investment and the incentives derivable from politics in Nigeria arguably makes it a fight for life agenda. Politics in Nigeria is an investment and Nigerian is arguably one of the most expensive democracies in the world. The resources required to maintain the leaders are outrageously ridiculous. Scales of reckless spending and uncontrolled use of materialism is rift in Nigerian politics. That is often used as a means of persuading vulnerable and poor Nigerian electorates into all sort of election fraud including selling of votes.

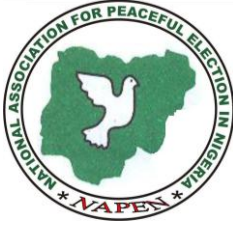
The acceptance of the result of the 1999 election was purely on the basis of having no further options having lived under oppressive military regime for over 30 years. The level of acceptance was not based on its freeness but one of choosing from bad and worse. In 2003 election, Nigerian witnessed an unprecedented level of electoral violence. Electoral fraud ranges from ballot stuffing, intimidation, killing, assassination etc. In-shot it was a triumph of violence. There were no elections but merely the intimidation of voters and the selection of already



decided winners by elites and caucuses. Human Right Watch reported that in April and May 2003, at least one hundred people were killed and many more injured during federal and state elections in Nigeria and most of the violence was perpetrated by the ruling PDP and its supporters (Human Rights Watch, 2004, p. 1). The subsequent local government election the next year was also a repeat of the 2003 general election with wide spread electoral violence across the country. In some places election did not even take place but results were announced. In other cases thugs and hired machineries snatched ballot boxes and thumb printed the ballot papers in favour of their candidates. USIP noted that violence during the 2003 election cycle was more blatant and widespread and marked the unchecked proliferation of another worrisome development; the hiring and arming of militias to serve narrow political ends (Onwudiwe and Berwind-Dart, 2010).

The 2007 general election was not far from the previous ones. Having witnessed repeated electoral violence over the past years coupled with years of military dictatorship, Nigerians can easily be cowed to electoral pacifism. The level of killing and intimidation was high and merely declaring oneself as a candidate can get you killed. The 2007 election was worse than the 1999 and 2003. The scale of violence was unprecedented. In a research project by IFES-Nigeria aimed at collecting, documenting, reporting and mitigating incidences of electoral violence in Nigeria, IFES verified and reported total of 967 incidents of electoral violence². The reported incident included 18 death/killing from January 13 – April 30 2007 (IFES-Nigeria, 2007). Human Rights Watch also highlighted in its report that the run-up to Nigeria's April 2007

² Cases of abduction and kidnapping, murder and killing, protest, disruption, intimidation and physical attack and well as poster defacing all featured in the incidents reported by IFES EVER project. See EVER report No.6 for comprehensive list of incidents.



elections has been violent, with campaigning in many areas beset by political killings, bombings and armed clashes between supporters of rival political factions. It further argued that this forms part of a broader pattern of violence and abuse that is inherent in Nigeria's largely unaccountable political system (Human Rights Watch, 2007).

3.1 Previewing the 2011 Election:

As Nigerian prepares for another election in April 2011, signs and trends send signals of a repeat of electoral violence across Nigeria. If trends in 2003 and 2007 are to be relied upon in predicting the scale of electoral violence in the 2011 elections, then Nigeria might as well prepare for the worst. Although, the appointment of the new Chairman was greeted with cheers and hope, the political parties are showing no sign of changing from the trends of the previous elections. The spirit of Nigerians and the enthusiasm around the country suggest readiness on the part of the large majority of the electorate for free and credible violent free election.

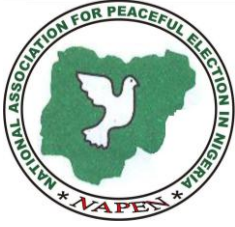
Consolidating democracy and ensuring credible elections in Nigeria requires building the institutional capacity of the electoral commission, comprehensive and broad based electoral framework as well as controlling the level of violence through a framework that would give responsibility to all stakeholders with radical reprimand for failure. The 2011 elections present an opportunity for Nigeria commitment to credible and transparent elections. However, the vibes from the political circle suggest that Nigeria might be in for large scale violence as witnessed in 2003 and 2007. A recent report on electoral hot spot indicates high propensity for violence across the zones³. In as much as some states were identified as potentially low spots, the report

³ Election 'Hot Spot' Analysis/; A study of election-related violence ahead of the 2011 elections in Nigeria by Sam Unom and Jide Ojo.



nonetheless sends a clear warning on the dangers ahead of the 2011 elections. A closer examination of the political parties especially the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) reveal high level intra-party strife, disintegration and violence. Campbell (2010) argued that the party has little internal discipline, no political platform or principles, and it generates little popular enthusiasm. With the declaration of intent by the incumbent and with the reversion of PDP agreed pattern of rotational presidency, the Nigerian political atmosphere look highly charged and tensed. Some faction of the political elite mostly from the North are very disgruntled with the current power equation in PDP and are not willing to compromise for the incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan as the PDP flag bearer. This formation persuaded the former Head of state General Babangida (Rt) to step aside for former Vice President Alhaki Atiku Abubakar in order to improve their chances of wresting power out from the incumbent. The trend means that there would be no elite consensus candidate from PDP. Hence the current intra-party crisis is unavoidable and there are chances of anti party activities in days and weeks to come. However, as Campbell noted; a divided PDP poses problem to security and stability of Nigeria (Campbell, 2010, p. 2).

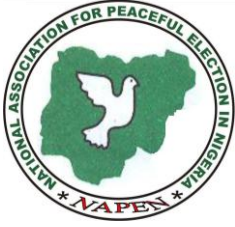
This pattern is not new in Nigeria and the outcomes in the past were not very destabilising. The April 2011 election is by and large a potential time bomb for further conflict in Nigeria. Aside the PDP, other parties including the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), Congress for Progressive Change CPC, All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and the Labour Party (LP) are showing no signs of relenting and are all fired to challenging the ruling PDP at all levels. And with the candidacy of former chairman of the anti graft commission (EFCC) Mallam Nuhu



Ribadu and the former Head of State General Buhari (Rt), Nigeria seem set for a very decisive period in its electoral history.

The recent court decision against some PDP states also indicates that candidates might opt to win clearly and clean rather than entangles themselves in webs of intricacies and uncertainty. In honest assessment one cannot predict for certain what the intents of a Nigerian politician. The only certain thing is that there will be large scale violence and level of intolerance from rival parties especially if there are attempt to thwart election outcome. Another worrisome scenario is the attitude of the Nigerian electorates to voting. Having been denied the dividends of democracy for many years and with hunger and unemployment still pervasive materialism and monetary inducement would play a big role in the forth coming elections. In a research carried out, it was discovered that almost one out of five (1/5) Nigerian is personally exposed to vote buying and that almost one in ten (1/10) experiences threats of electoral violence (Bratton, 2008). The implication is that violence reduces turnout; and vote buying enhances partisan loyalty that in turn cause electoral violence. The research further exposed that the politicians concentrate their effort on vote buying, material inducement and other forms of electoral violence in rural poor communities(Bratton, 2008). This means that to ensure credible and violent free elections in the forth coming polls requires great attention both in urban and rural areas.

Another angle to the Nigerian electoral and political situation is the possibility of military intervention. With the break down in consensus in PDP, there is increasing signs that the 2011 election would be hotly contested and candidates might resort to ethnic, tribal and religious sentiments to win votes. Similarly, aggrieved members of the ruling PDP might play anti party politics including last minutes deflection and mobilization of support against the PDP.



Therefore, the scenario means that all parties and contestants would employ all possible means to win election including violence and inciting of religious and ethnic rancour, which might lead to broader conflict. The scenario is already playing out in Plateau State where politicians are using their Christian identity to galvanised support against Muslim Huasa Fulani(Campbell, 2010). Therefore, if violence spread across Nigeria beyond manageable capacity of the Nigerian Police, the military might be tempted to step in, but not in the capacity to maintain law and order but to seize power.

3.2 Current incentives for electoral violence in Nigeria:

3.2.1 State institutions promote violence

It has been observed that state institutions through their acts of commission or omission promote electoral violence. They include the police, election management bodies and the judiciary. The actions and inactions of these institutions in one way or the other provide a hot bed for electoral violence in Nigeria. In cases where police aid and abate the rigging of elections as well as the intimidation of voters, it means that the institution that should protect the electoral has turned against them.

3.2.2 There is a culture of impunity in Nigerian society

Despite lip service paid to stumping out violence successive governments in Nigeria have made little significant effort to ensure that government officials and members of the security forces implicated in violations of civil and political rights, including election-related violence, are held to account. While only small minorities of the human rights abuses that have been documented were directly carried out by federal government officials, the federal government's



failure to combat widespread impunity for abuses orchestrated by government and party officials at the state and local level has fostered the unabated continuation of those abuses.

Throughout the country, there is an entrenched culture of impunity at all levels of Nigeria's government which started under the military rule and has remained a source of the country's worst human rights abuses since the return to civilian rule in 1999. On several occasions since then, the Nigerian military has carried out misdirected reprisals against civilian populations, destroying entire communities and murdering hundreds of Nigerian civilians. No one has been held to account for ordering or participating in those atrocities. The Nigerian police routinely torture criminal suspects without trial. The governments' rhetoric and acknowledgement of the problem does not translate to tangible actions to bring those responsible to account or prevent future abuses. More than 11,000 Nigerians were killed in hundreds of separate outbreaks of inter-communal and political violence during the Obasanjo administration. Many of those deaths came about in large scale and apparently highly organized massacres along ethnic and religious lines. No one has been held to account for their role in organizing or inciting those massacres. During the same period several high profile Nigerians were assassinated in attacks widely believed to be politically motivated, including Attorney General Bola Ige in December 2001.

This culture of impunity is also a recurring theme in almost all cases of electoral violence, which started as a carryover from other forms of unabated human right abuses. Human Rights Watch reported that the overwhelming majority of politically motivated cases of violence have not resulted in prosecutions (Onwudiwe and Berwind-Dart, 2010; Human Rights Watch, 2004; Human Rights Watch, 2007). It attributes this to corruption or undue influence of politicians



over the police and/or the police inability to carry out effective investigations because of inadequate or wasted resources. The 2007 elections provided a vivid illustration of the unshakable confidence of many Nigerian public officials and politicians in their culture of impunity. Just as remarkable as the massive scale of the fraud that characterized the polls was the openness with which violence, vote theft and other abuses were carried out. Several election observer groups reported ballot box stuffing, intimidation and other abuses carried out in the most public manner possible.

Violence unleashed by politicians and their sponsors during elections and other periods of political contestation does not simply fade away once the political battles have been decided. In many cases violence fomented for the purpose of winning elections has taken on a life and logic of its own and continued to generate widespread human rights abuses over the long term. Several Nigerian states have been plagued by enduring violence after politicians either abandon or lose control over the gangs they initially employed. These failures are tremendous, but in fact the Nigerian government has done far worse than simply fail to address the problem of impunity effectively. Through many of its actions the federal government has encouraged the commission of human rights abuses at the state and local levels and has thereby undercut its own limited efforts at promoting reform and accountability. In many cases federal institutions have worked actively to prevent individuals accused of human rights abuses from being held to account.

3.2.3 Political leaders at all levels perpetrate electoral violence with impunity

Electoral violence in Nigeria is most often carried out by gangs (commonly called thugs) whose members are openly recruited, financed and sometimes armed by public officials,

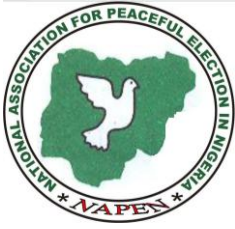


politicians and party officials or their representatives. These gangs, comprised primarily of unemployed young men are mobilized to attack their sponsors' rivals, intimidate members of the public, rig elections and protect their patrons from similar attacks. Often, sponsors of electoral violence take time and again to the same criminal gangs, violent campus-based “cults” and other sources to recruit agents of political violence. Those recruited are paid, often very little, and sometimes armed for the sole purpose of carrying out violent abuses on behalf of their political sponsors.

3.2.4 The absence of institutional and legal solutions against Electoral violence

There has been so much foot dragging on the establishment of the Electoral Offences Tribunal. The absence of such body has (as expected) resulted in the non prosecution of violators. Section 131 of the Electoral Act 2010, for example, provides that A person who:

- a. Directly or indirectly, by himself or by another person on his behalf, makes use of or threatens to make use of any force, violence or restraint;
- b. Inflicts or threatens to inflict by himself or by any other person, any minor or serious injury, damage, harm or loss on or against a person in order to induce or compel that person to vote or refrain from voting, or on account of such person having voted or refrained from voting; or
- c. By abduction, duress, or a fraudulent device or contrivance, impedes or prevents the free use of the vote by a voter or thereby compels, induces, or prevails on a voter to give or refrain from giving his vote,



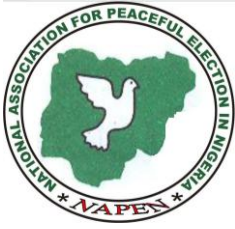
- d. By preventing any political aspirants from free use of the media, designated vehicles, mobilization of political support and campaign at an election, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of N1, 000,000 or imprisonment for 3 years.

There above electoral law line and clauses are merely paper work document without adequate machinery in place for enforcing it. Nigeria government should set up as a matter of urgency and with consideration to the scale of electoral violence in the past three elections set up Electoral Violence Offence Tribunal to enforce the law. Moreover, considering what it is at stake in Nigerian politics and desire to win at all cost by the politicians, N1.000, 000 or 3 years imprisonment is not enough. All Nigerian politicians can easily afford the former option without having to work any harder. Therefore, in order to deter politicians from perpetrating electoral violence with impunity, tougher and radical law need to be in place with strong and independent enforcement mechanism.

3.2.5 Inadequate documented and public knowledge

Presently, there are inadequate systematically documented and well codified electoral violence perspectives, causes and impact on the credibility of Nigeria's elections. Although the work of IFES-NAPEN in the lead up to the 2007 elections⁴ and other organizations like Human Rights Watch awakened the minds of Nigerian on electoral violence, there are still more to be done in stamping a big hold on electoral violence in Nigeria. Academic interest, research and projects on electoral violence should be encouraged and INEC should design a framework for

⁴ More details on EVER project on <http://www.ifes.org/Content/Projects/Applied-Research-Center/Cross-Cutting/Election-Violence-Education-and-Resolution.aspx>



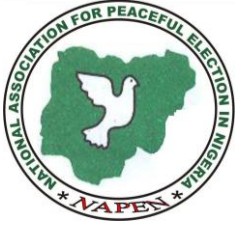
documenting of verified electoral violence with perpetrators and/or sponsors identified in order to checkmate the excesses of the politicians.

3.2.6 Perpetrator – Beneficiary Hypothesis

God-fatherism has been identified as both a symptom and a cause of the violence and corruption that together permeates the political marrow of Nigeria. Public officials who owe their position to the efforts of a political God-fathers incur a debt that they are expected to repay without end throughout their tenure in office. God-fathers are only relevant because politicians are able to deploy violence and corruption with impunity to compete for office in contests that often effectively and sometimes actually, exclude Nigerian voters' altogether. But their activities also help to reinforce the central role of violence and corruption in politics by making it even more difficult to win elected office without resorting to the illegal tactics they represent. Nigeria's God-fatherism phenomenon is not unique to the ruling PDP, but as with many of the other abuses described in this report it is seen most often in the conduct of PDP officials as both a cause and a result of the party's success in maintaining itself in power. Reports suggest that PDP has perpetrated the highest numbers of electoral violence since the 1999 election to the last 2007 election yet, PDP is also the biggest beneficiary of electoral violence in Nigeria having maintained the highest number of political positions in Nigeria.

3.2.7 Perpetrator – Valiant Hypothesis

Many individuals facing credible allegations of electoral violence and myriad forms of corruption have been rewarded with positions of influence and power by the government. Anambra State political God-father Chris Uba remained a member of the PDP board of trustees. Chris Uba's brother Andy received the presidency's political support for his bid for the

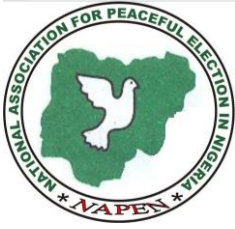


governorship of Anambra State despite his implication in corrupt activities and his campaign team's open recruitment of cult gangs to intimidate electoral opponents. Oyo State erstwhile political God-father Lamidi Adedibu retained his position of political power within the PDP and Oyo politics as a whole despite his open involvement in fomenting political violence in the state. Across Nigeria politicians control retinue of crowd and supporters for their violent exploit during elections.

3.2.8 Prebendal politics as a the basis for electoral violence

According to the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) and UNDP (2003) the most important common factor in the causes of conflict today is the phenomenon of political corruption. The concentration of resources in the state makes the possession of political power very lucrative and the competition for political positions very intense. As Richards Joseph observed, 'Nigeria's present and future depend upon a prior understanding of the nature, extent and persistence of a certain mode of political behaviour, and of its social and economic ramifications' (quoted in IPCR and UNDP, 2003). This mode of political behaviour is the '***prebendal*** culture' which sees politics as the clearing house for jobs, contract, and official plunder. In Joseph's words:

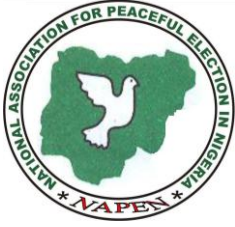
'Democratic politics and prebendal politics are two sides of the same coin in Nigeria; each can be turned over to reveal the other...The system of prebendal politics enables divergent groups and constituencies to seek to accommodate their interest ... The system is often wasteful, unproductive, and contributes to the increasing affluence of the relative few, paltry gains for a larger number, and misery for the great majority of people. Since it is a self-justifying system which grants legitimacy to



a pattern of persistent conflict, and since its modus operandi is to politicise ethnic, religious and linguistic differences, it serves to make the Nigerian polity a simmering cauldron of un-resolvable tension over which a lid must regularly be clamped, and just as regularly removed (Joseph, 1991:10 quoted in ICPR and UNDP 2003).

ICPR and UNDP thus concluded that: 'The different factors causing conflict cannot be addressed in a fair and convincing way because of 'prebendal politics' and so they may become deeper and more connected, with one another. Religious factors become dangerous when they are linked to politics, but even more so when linked to ethnicity and north-south divisions. The age-old competition between pastoralists and farmers becomes intense when the political system fails to regulate them and competition over resources may turn to violence if arms are readily available. The Police are both inefficient and corrupt. Policemen are ill-equipped to function effectively and ill-remunerated to be able to resist attempts to corrupt them. The effect is that first transgressors are not apprehended either because the Police are bribed to look the other way or because there is not resources.

The Judiciary, which is touted as the hope of common man, has not lived up to its billing. The wheel of justice grinds slowly and with an unsure gait, which aggrieved parties find both frustrating and expensive. The breakdown of order in society makes people call for extreme solutions such as 'Bakassi Boys' (vigilantes) and military repression. But such 'solutions' may only make things worse by weakening the State and diverting attention from the need to improve basic institutions of governance, notably the police. Invariably politics then become a battle ground in which every weapon, and tactics is deployed for political victory through all forms of electoral violence.



Chapter Four

4.0 Identifying Hot-Spots and Potential Time Bombs

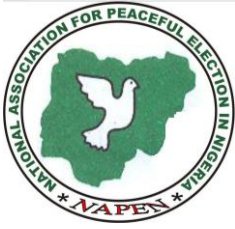
This chapter focuses on identifying hot spots and potential time bombs for the 2011 elections. The result is based on desk study on electoral and political events across the country from September 2010 to January 2011. The hotspots will be examined along zonal line starting with the South to the North. Indicator colours are used to show different scales of risk from high to low. .

Table 1 *Indicator Colours*

	High Risk
	Moderate Risk
	Low Risk

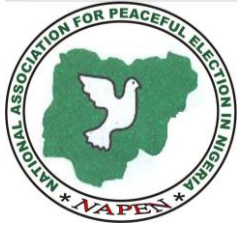
4.1 South-East:

Anambra is known for its notoriety in electoral violence and the preponderance use of power by God-fathers. It was in Anambra that a service Governor was abducted by mere order to AIG of police by a God-father (Chris Uba); the then political God-father in Anambra politics. However, having conducted its gubernatorial elections in February 2010, less tension is on Anambra state as far as the office of the governor is concerned. Nonetheless, other elections would hold including the presidential elections and the national and state houses of assembly. The twist is that, it is an opportunity for All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) to control greater majority in the state house of assembly as well secure majority votes for APGA candidates that are up for National Assembly positions. The declaration of the former minister



for Information Prof Dora Akunyili for the senate under APGA shows the seriousness of APGA in resting power away from PDP. Although Anambra is not top on the list, it is always a state to watch for during election because thuggery and gangs activities are inherent in Anambra politics. More indication of potential intensity of election in Anambra is the recent deflection of serving members of the House of Representatives and a Senator from the PDP to the ACN. In as much as it can be argued that it provides a balance for good competition in Anambra State, it also serves as a reminder that elections in the state calls for attention. However, the lack of gubernatorial elections minimises the expected level of electoral violence and Anambra is a moderate risk state.

Enugu used to be the centre stage and the political hub of the South East is gearing up for a serious political showdown. It looked easy for the incumbent Governor Bar. Sullivan I Chime even with opposition from former Governor Dr Chimaroke Nnamani until Dr Okwesilieze Nwodo became the PDP national chairman. The ascendancy of Nwodo changed the political equation in Enugu State. Enugu is known for three key political blocs and dynasty; the Nwodos, the Ebeano group, which gave birth to the current governor and the deflected Nwobodo group. However, with the fallout between Chime and Nnamani, the political draft rotated thus merging Chime and the Nwobodo against Nnamani who also is the erstwhile political son to Nwobodo. After, the short lived period of Nwodos during the aborted second republic, the Nwodo dynasty has largely remained underground until his new position as the PDP chairman. This reawakened the political kingdom of the Nwodos. Therefore, while it appears that there might be compromises and alliances, the pendulum still remains unclear.



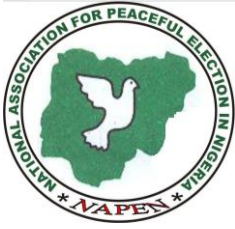
The emergence of Nwodo political dynasty also brought with itself overt internal crisis within Enugu PDP. Struggle over the composition and legality of the state executive under the INEC rule is still on. Recently held state congresses in the state were cancelled showing obvious signals of power tussle and supremacy between Nwodo and the incumbent. An editorial by Kajatan Chuma on the ThisDay newspaper, it was noted that thuggery and violence have returned with disturbing intensity in the state⁵. There is high level of intolerance from opposition emanating from the powers that be in the state. The section in the ThisDay suggests that a government once in shelves and looks calm and devoid of violence is bringing all sort of electoral violence to the fore. Similarly, in an interview with Obiechina on November 17, 2010 by NBF News, he expressed deep regret on the internal problem rocking the PDP in the state and warned that the state is set for a fierce election⁶. Invariably, Enugu State is a state for keen observers and a potential time bomb. The electoral violence tendencies in Enugu are predictably high.

In Abia State the double deflection of the incumbent government from Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA) to APGA and finally to PDP shows nothings but signs of desperation. Initial reaction on his first deflected to APGA was that, at least there will be fresh start for APGA in Abia state, but observers warned that PDP is watching closely to snap up the unsettled governor⁷. Predictably so, it was not longer before he embarked on another journey of deflection to PDP. However, to ensure his safe landing into the PDP arms, he outlined some conditions

⁵ More on <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/as-nnaedozi-raises-governance-ante/270/>

⁶ More on <http://www.nigerianbestforum.com/blog/?p=65611>

⁷ More <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/abia-orji-s-defection-changes-political-equation/83656/>



that will guarantee his ticket for the governorship under PDP⁸. It is clear that the incumbent governor has followed the same path as his colleagues in Enugu by going against his erstwhile political God-father and former governor of the state Orji Kalu. This makes Abia an interesting watch in the 2011 elections. While PDP is keen in regaining Abia, the former governor and the erstwhile political God-Father to the incumbent will not allow that unchallenged. APGA on the other side will be feeling cheated and would want to prove a big point to the incumbent.

Coincidentally, Abia state is the hot bed for kidnapping activities in the South East and some of the kidnapers have decried their level of dissatisfaction with the government and the political class. They further vowed to pay the politicians back in their own coin. Hence, election period provides them the opportunity to pay back. They pay back means disaster for Abia electorates. In an interview with Senator Abaribe by the Vanguard newspaper, he called Abia state a time bomb waiting to explode. He linked the current kidnapping to the bad policies of the state government and noted that although the recent electoral reforms and the new management structure of INEC breaths a new life into the electoral and political system, Abia should be watched closely. The power tussles for the office of the Governor and the availability of thugs and bad groups coupled with proliferation of small arms in Abia makes a potential time bomb and a high risk state during the 2011 elections.

The Imo political situation continues to linger. While the case challenging the incumbent by the APGA candidate in the 2007 elections is still on. Political parties are gearing up to battle it out once more. While the PPA might not present strong opposition to the PDP even though the

⁸ More <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/pdp-s-desperate-move-to-grab-orji/80479/>

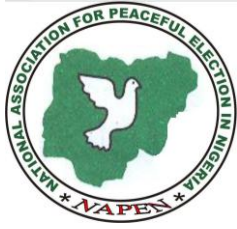


governor deflected from PPA, APGA will want to prove a point in the 2011 elections. There are also fears of spill over of kidnapping effect from neighbouring Abia state, but does not seem to portend high risk for Imo State and Imo is regarded as moderately risk state.

Ebonyi state has in the past seen minimal political violence. However the current political situation that placed three strong political heavy weights at each other sends a worrisome signs. While the incumbent Chief Martin Elechi seem to having upper hand, the challenges from Senator Julius Ucha (ANPP), Ambassador Frank Ogbuewu (APGA) and Chief Adol Awam (ACN) serves as a pointer to observers. Also, the last communal clashes in Ebonyi state left many youths with arms and there are still traces bitterness along tribal line, Ebonyi state found itself in a very unusual political and electoral scenario. Politicians can easily incite tribal hatred to score cheap political points and there are tendencies of support along tribal lines, which will open up space for clashes that will cut across election and tribe. Therefore, with the officer of the governor up for grab and the presence of organized violent youth group/tribal conflict, Ebonyi state is rated to be a high risk state. Below is the indicator table for South East.

Table 2: South East Indicator

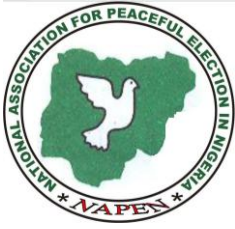
States	
Enugu	Red
Anambra	Yellow
Imo	Yellow
Abia	Red
Ebonyi	Red



4.2 The South – West

The South-West political situation is currently bringing an intriguing yet exciting surprise in the Nigerian political system. One by one, the PDP is virtually losing the South-West to opposition parties. At first it was Ondo state to Labour Party (LP), followed by Ekiti and Osun state to ACN. Oyo and Ogun remains the only PDP state in the region. With the trends of political events and the changing loyalty and current opposition stronghold in the zone, there are obvious changes in the political pendulum. Moreover, the recent internal crisis rocking PDP nationally and in the South West as well compounds the woes for PDP. The loss of the governorship seats of Osun and Ekiti states by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is clearly a bad signal to the party. The current internal wrangling that has divided the PDP power brokers in the zone including the former president Olusegun Obasanjo (OBJ), gives the others parties room for robust campaign.

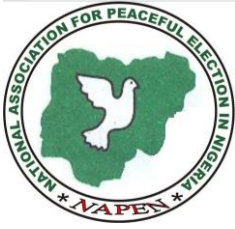
Also, there is showing high level of dissatisfaction from the South –West electorate on the PDP. They expected their PDP governors to be progressive and follow in line with legendary Chief Obafemi Awolowo, which they clearly failed to achieve. Also counting against the PDP is the performance of the Lagos state governor who has made noticeable development progress more than his PDP counter parts in other South West states. While the 2011 election provides the best opportunity for the contending parties in the South West, the PDP, the ACN and the LP to show which of them is truly preferred by the people, it is a clear sign that the battle ground is set fierce election. Although the recent court judgment might play a part in minimizing electoral violence thereby allowing the electorate to fully decide against the God-father.



The recent court judgments in Osun and Ekiti means that gubernatorial elections would not hold on both states nonetheless, it is an opportunity for all parties in the zone to struggle for the control of the both the state house of assembly and the national seats allocated to the states. But since the court judgment was based on electoral fraud inclusive of electoral violence, candidates for the 2011 elections in the zones might as well understand that their games are up. Sulaimon Olanrewaju on the Tribune Thursday, of 2nd December 2010 noted that the caveat from the annulment of these elections is that if electoral violence is proved, both the perpetrator and victim stand pay the price. Since the result would no doubt be a misrepresentation of the wishes of the people, such results are bound to be discarded as the court has proved in both Ekiti and Osun cases⁹. And that means that, candidates could as well be very vigilant to avoid electoral violence in areas where that hold strong advantage less cancellation might be the case if electoral violence is proved. Impliedly, it places all aspirants in a position of responsibility to ensure that electoral violence is averted because if proved the perpetrator might as well become loser.

There will only be three governorship elections in the South – West namely Lagos, Oyo and Ogun state while Ondo will wait until 2013 and Ekiti and Osun until 2014. Keen analysts and observers alike would agree that, while the gubernatorial elections in the three states would add more fire to the elections there, the other three states as well merit attention. Moreso, because of struggle for the control of the state in future, the houses of Assembly, Representatives and Senate are likely to stare up tension.

⁹ More on <http://www.tribune.com.ng/index.php/politics/14211-ekiti-osun-judgments-and-future-elections>

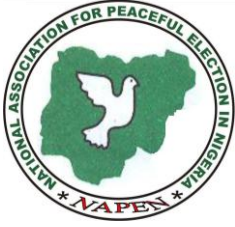


Although there would be elections for the office of the governor in Lagos state, the tendencies for electoral violence is not high. Lagos state is not a remarkably violent state and the level of political awareness and consciousness in Lagos is high compared to the other states in the zone. Added to this is the achievement of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) government in Lagos state compared to Ogun and Oyo. The trend indicates that Lagos would not generate high electoral violence and is therefore rated low. The availability of technology, media presence and the attraction Lagos has to international community would also play part in the minimal level of electoral violence in the state.

Ogun and Oyo are potential time bombs. In Oyo the recent killing of factional leader of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) indicates what is to come. Sahara reporter duped Oyo; the Killing Fields¹⁰. Both intra and inter party electoral violence is expected in Oyo state. Intra-party between the incumbent governor and the Senate Majority leader Teslim Folarin and inter party between PDP and other opposition parties in the state. Electoral violence expectation in Ogun is high because of both intra-party squabbles within PDP and the opposition party challenge to wrestle power away from the PDP. The PDP and ACN are likely to battle it out with wounded Amosun ready for another shot for the governorship seat under a perceived stronger platform (ACN) in than the ANPP he used in 2007.

Ondo, Ekiti and Osun are also moderate risk states largely because of the absence of gubernatorial elections that would have generated further tension. Notwithstanding the parties in

¹⁰ More on <http://www.saharareporters.com/news-page/oyo-state-killing-fields-claims-nurtw-chairman-eleweomo>



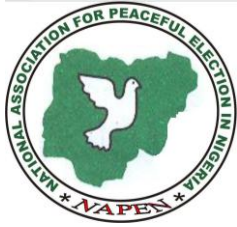
the state would like to use this election to gain control of the state and would not comprise effort at winning.

Table 3: South West Indicator

States	
Lagos	Green
Ogun	Red
Osun	Yellow
Ekiti	Yellow
Oyo	Red
Ondo	Yellow

4.3 South – South:

South – South is one of the most important zones in the 2011 elections. The incumbent President; an aspirant for the position of the President under the platform of PDP is from the zone. His ascendancy into power came as a result of the death of the former president Umar Musa Ya radua. Hence be default he inherited that position de-facto. Since his inheritance of the position, controversy has surrounded his aspiration to continue for another four years in office as initially planned with his deceased boss. This does not go down well with some quarters of PDP elites especially from the North who felt that the Presidency should return to the North as originally agreed by the PDP. However, the President insistent on contesting generated intense debate across the country and ignited intra-party crisis within PDP. The former Vice president Alhaji Atiku Abubakar seems the strongest opposition to the incumbent. And the presumed



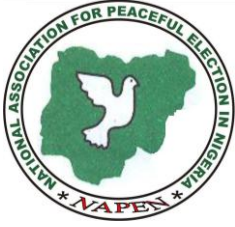
endorsement from the Northern power brokers means that the incumbent has a mountain to climb.

In Delta state, the recent re-run of the gubernatorial election means that Delta state might witness mild electoral tussle in the 2011 elections. However, the activities of the militant in the zone who are readymade machinery for electoral violence in 1999 and 2003 elections means that Delta state cannot be ignored. The role of the militant and cults in the past elections and their links to politicians have shown how they can trigger electoral violence in the state. The ACN control on neighboring Edo state and the development progress made by the government of Adams Oshiomole means that Delta state is a contestable state and not an easy one for PDP.

The house of assembly seats and the representative and senatorial seats will be hotly contested and since the militants are readymade machinery for perpetuation of electoral violence, Delta state is a state to watch out for. The re-run gubernatorial election with minor cases of ballot snatching and diversion of ballot papers by the militants and thugs as reported by Sahara Reporter¹¹ means that the activities of the militant deserve a careful watch in the 2011 elections in the state. Nevertheless, the absence of the governorship elections will minimize electoral violence in Delta state and is predictably a moderate risk state.

The verdict of the tribunal on Edo state governorship election in 2007 changed the political pendulum and handed the power of the ACN. PDP would have loved an opportunity to wrestle power away from the ACN on the gubernatorial front in 2011, but would have faced a

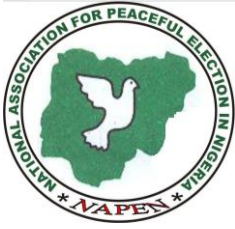
¹¹ More on <http://www.saharareporters.com/news-page/video-delta-re-run-stealing-ballots>



very strong incumbent who is having some features of development progress in the state and has also surpassed previous PDP governors in the state in terms of development achievements. However, antecedes trends with regards to electoral violence in the state suggest that observers should pay close attention but since the gubernatorial elections will not hold in the 2011 elections, chances are that it will be minimal and Edo is a moderate risk state.

In Cross River and Akwa-Ibom states respectively are where the offices of the governor are up for grabs. Although the former is not known for much of electoral violence but the latter has little history and in the past weeks has started showing traces of electoral violence. The recent primaries by the PDP and the killing of one Mr Toni Etebi, alleged to be by the men of the security forces under the command of a PDP stalwart means that Akwa Ibom deserves a more critical look. Like other states, the PDP is rocked by intra-party crises in the state and the power brokers are in loggerheads with each other. This might follow the adage that when two elephants fight, the grass will suffer. Invariably, there are likelihoods for the deployment of the thugs for cheap electoral success. The situation in Cross River state seems calm with the former governor and the incumbent not showing any signs of disagreement publicly. Also, following the revelation by the former governor, it appears that he might be out to correct the wrongs of the past and so would not indulge in power tussle and/or activities that would cause electoral violence. Cross Rivers predicatively is a potentially a low risk state while Akwa Ibom is a moderate risk state.

Bayelsa and Rivers are regarded as hottest spots in the zone. With the president coming from Bayelsa plus the obvious intra party crisis in the PDP, the tendencies are high. Similarly, the

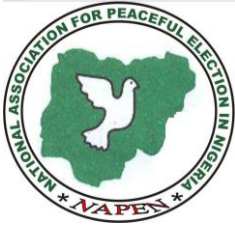


decamping of former presidential adviser on Niger Delta Affairs to an opposition party and the follow up assignation attempt on his life send ripples across the state. He accused the state government of been behind the attack and noted that it was so because he is considered a threat to the incumbent hence the attack¹². The worrisome part if that there is high proliferation of small arms in the state and the cults and militants are at the beck and call of anyone would could afford it. Therefore, the former Advice is also capable of using the same strategy, which would likely result in overt and fierce electoral violence. Bayelsa is a high risk state

Electoral Violence expectations in Rivers follows similar pattern as Bayelsa State. With the office the governor under threat various camps especially that of the former governor Peter Odili, the state is set for a fierce test for the incumbent and God-fathersim. Coming into power by the decision of the Supreme Court with less hold on the party machinery and structures, the incumbent was left vulnerable and in dire need to capture the state party machinery. However, as noted by Unom and Ojo¹³, the question remains if the former governor and the short lived governor are willing to relinquish that structure to him. Similarly, the availability of organised cult groups and the militant provide an easy route for electoral violence in the state. Antecedents from the previous elections showed that Rivers state is one of the hottest states known for electoral violence in Nigeria. However, it might be argued that the amnesty programme has disarmed and dismembered some of the groups, albeit the activities of some rival and breakaway

¹² More on <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/alaibe-how-i-escaped-death/84663/>

¹³ More on Election 'Hot Spot' Analysis: A study of election-related violence ahead of the 2011 elections in Nigeria



groups indicates that Rivers state deserves great attention. Following pattern and with critical examination of current socio-political trends in the state, Rivers state is rated high.

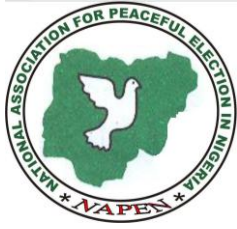
Table 4: South-South Indicator

States	
Rivers	Red
Cross- River	Green
Akwa-Ibom	Yellow
Edo	Yellow
Delta	Yellow
Bayelsa	Red

4.4 North Central

Benue, Kogi and Plateau are at high risk. The feud between Akume (the former governor and now a senator) and Governor Suswan tend to dominate the politics of Benue state. Akume who openly claims he single handedly made Suswan governor in spite of opposition from many people in the state has used all public occasions to denigrate Suswan leading to political feud between them. Suswan is said to be sponsoring someone to contest the senate seat against Akume. Benue has high profile cases of murder, assassination, attempted murder, kidnap and other forms of harassment of known opponents of the government.

Kogi is notorious for political violence. Since the creation of the state in 1991, the Eastern Senatorial district (inhabited mainly by the igala the largest ethnic group in the state) has



continued to monopolize the highest level of political power in the state. This has resulted in the manipulation of ethnic identity in the state. Consequently there has been great stress and strain on inter and intra-group relations resulting in a vicious cycle of growing tension and conflict across the state. The state has thus been polarized into two power blocs – ‘power stay’ and ‘power shift’. The ‘power stay’ and ‘power shift’ arguments are based on forces of identity and have led to violent clashes in towns, villages and hamlets. For example, on May 29, 2005, during the celebration of Democracy Day a group believed to loyal to late Senator A. T. Ahmed (head of the ‘power shift’ bloc) launched a violent attack on the Kogi State Stadium leaving several people injured. During the governorship re-run elections the police intercepted bus loads of thugs imported from a neighboring state.

Plateau has seen the worst form of electoral violence in this zone. Fallout from local elections in November 2008 left several hundreds dead. Electoral contests have always been conducted against the background of settler/indigene divide. The politically conscious settlers are predominantly Muslims while the indigenes are predominantly Christians. This has introduced a dangerous religious element into the politics of the state. Each side of the divide has resorted to the use exclusionary tactics to get political power. The battle has always been fierce in Jos North where local elections have always been violent.

Because Plateau has witnessed series of communal clashes there is a proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Recent discoveries testify to this. There have been reports of several cases of reprisal killings and what the people of the state refer to as ‘silent killings’. The governorship seat is being contested by a host contestants including Pollen Tallen, the embattled



deputy governor. There is intense media war, mainly over foreign radio stations, with each side freely using hate language.

The October 1 bomb blast has added a new element in the security concerns of the Federal Capital Territory. There has also been at least a high profile politically motivated kidnap. The local elections in the FCT had pockets of violence. The FCT Police spokesman, Mr. Moshood Jimoh, told newsmen that eight young men were arrested while brandishing machetes and knives in an attempt to disrupt the counting of results in Area 1 within the Abuja Municipal Area Council on Saturday evening while the police anti-terrorist squad and an Armoured Personnel Carrier vehicle had to be brought to the area. Thirty three others were also arrested for violently blocking the Abuja-Lokoja highway at Abaji area council while protesting the election results in the area. The protesters were said to have blocked the road and unleashed mayhem on road users, smashing car windscreens and indulging in other violent acts.

In Nasarawa Governor Doma’s open support for President Jonathan has pitched him against supporters of the zoning arrangement of the ruling PDP, now being championed by politicians from the Northern par.

Table 5: North Central indicator

States	
FCT	Yellow
Niger	Yellow
Kwara	Yellow
Kogi	Red

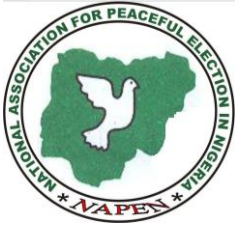


Benue	
Plateau	
Nassarawa	

4.5 North East

The violence being perpetrated by the Boko Haram Islamic sect puts Bauchi and Borno at a very high risk, especially, when one looks at the demand of the sect that the governors of these two states resign as a condition for ceasefire. In addition, Bauchi has been witnessing politically related cases of attacks and kidnap and a resurgence of thug activities particularly in the state capital. The recent congress of the opposition CPC has demonstrated the precarious security situation in the state, particularly in the state capital. Thugs besieged the venue of the compilation of the results resulting in the clash of supporters of rival candidates. A number of cars were smashed and the police had to be called in. The heavy presence of political thugs in the state puts it at high risk. The return of the former governor to the state recently rekindled the rivalry of 2007. A political tactic peculiar to the Northern part of the country is the composition of songs by usually unknown persons with heavy hate language and openly abusive. During the 2007 elections, so many of such songs were composed to denigrate the then governor and the PDP candidate. Now similar songs have been composed (according to some sources, by the same groups) to denigrate the present governor. Playing such songs had led to violent clashes.

In Borno, the incumbent governor is not contesting but there has been a lot of rumors first that he was supporting his wife to take over from him, then that he was supporting his brother to take over from him and recently that he has given the nod to his maternal uncle to



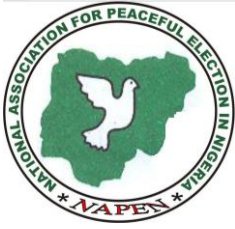
pick up the ANPP nomination form with a view to becoming the party’s candidate. There has been a massive defection from the ANPP to the CPC and it (CPC) is likely to put up a serious challenge. The PDP is also gearing up. With a very heavy presence of thug problem Borno is at a high risk.

In Gombe, although Danjuma Goje is not seeking re-election, having exhausted the two terms allowed by the constitution, the culture of intolerance still reigns in the state. There has been an intensification of clashes between supporters of the leading contenders for the governorship post. Although Ibrahim Dankwambo, the Accountant General of the Federation has not declared his intention to contest his supporters are known to be clashing with supporters of Inuwa Yahaya, the Gombe State Commissioner of Finance on regular intervals. In addition, Gombe has a heavy presence of thugs, known locally as the ‘Kalare’ and the leader of the notorious thug group is said to be nursing the ambition to contest the governorship of the state.

Adamawa is a state to watch. The emergence of Atiku, the former Vice President, as the consensus candidate of the North has open up the rivalry between him and the governor, Nyako did all he could to frustrate Atiku’s re-admission into the PDP. The declaration of General (rt) Marwa of his intention to contest has sent ripples throughout the state. Recently the chairman of the PDP in Mubi was killed by unknown person after he returned from Marwa’s declaration.

Table 6: North East Indicator

States	
Bauchi	
Gombe	



Borno	Red
Adamawa	Red
Yobe	Green
Taraba	Yellow

4.6 North West

Kaduna Kebbi and Zamfara are at high risk. Following the death of President Yar'adua and the ascension to the Vice Presidency of the Federation of the immediate past governor of Kaduna state, Namadi Sambo on 19 May 2010 his erstwhile deputy, Patrick Ibrahim Yakowa, a Christian from the southern part of the state emerged as the next governor of Kaduna state. In a state whose politics has long been dominated by the muslim Hausa-Fulani elite of the northern part of Kaduna state, this has raised political temperatures to new heights as radical muslim clerics and political conservatives are said to be too enthralled at this uncommon prospect. Indeed, this has polarized the state along religious lines and this is likely to be carried into the 2011 elections. In such a fraught environment, supporters of candidates are likely to exploit religious identities. This is a dangerous and potentially explosive dynamic.

In Zamfara State the rivalry between the former governor, Sani Yerima and the incumbent governor has led to an unfortunate deterioration of the political situation in the state. In August this year there was a bloody fracas in Gusau, the state capital which led to the death of several persons. During the mayhem there was a preponderance of irate youths (thugs) wielding all manner of dangerous weapons and shouting abusive slogans. Other potentially riotous incidents have erupted whenever the former governor, now a senator, visits the state.



In Kebbi, the various clashes between the former governor, Aliero, and the incumbent, Dakingari has led to the breakdown of law and order. On August 7 this year, for example, supporters of the two clashed and over 50 vehicles were reported to have been destroyed. Aliero is reported to be thinking of joining the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) from where he will sponsor a candidate who will challenge the re-election of Dakingari. With each side having armed youths the situation can best be imagined.

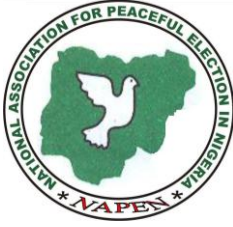
Kano is equally at high risk. Shekarau's insistence of Takai as his successor has split the ranks of the membership of the ruling ANPP in the state. The PDP which lost out to the ANPP in 2003 is planning to re-capture' the state. Kano which is the cradle of political thuggery in the northern part of the country, has more organized thug groups than any other state in the North. Politicians in desperation are likely to use thugs to intimidate opponents and this might likely result in bloody clashes between rival groups. The ward congresses of the CPC on December 11 are a foretaste of what is likely to happen. Several youths from different local governments took to the streets protesting the conduct of the congresses. The Board of trustees of the party had to cancel the elections and this has raised tension in the state.

Sokoto had a long legal battle over the governorship seat. Now that it is over, there is the possibility that each side will regroup for battle during the 2011 elections. The opposition has been accusing Wamakko of tearing all their posters and leaving only those of the PDP. The Bafarawa factor in Sokoto politics cannot be ignored. Bafarawa who was the governor of the state fell out with Wamako, the present governor and this has resulted in series of raids on his house, seen as politically motivated by most political observers of the state.



Table 7: North West Indicator

States	
Kaduna	Red
Kano	Red
Katsina	Yellow
Sokoto	Yellow
Jigawa	Green
Zamfara	Red
Kebbi	Red



Conclusion

The electoral violence in Nigerian has been on the rise since the 1999 elections. The level, magnitude and the machinery applied and employed by perpetrators keep evolving. A historical appraisal of Nigeria political system reveals an entrenched culture of political and electoral violence juxtaposed with materialism and monetary inducement in voting. The preview also reveals signs high violence than the previous years even though the level of political awareness over the past four years has risen marginally.

The report also that the internal crisis rocking the PDP sends a danger signal to the nations stability and security and might propel the unthinkable return to military rule. Question then remained unanswered whether the prediction by Former United States Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell is right or wrong. Whilst emphasis has been laid more on the PDP, the emergence of strong oppositions from ACN, CPC, ANPP and LP cannot be ignored.

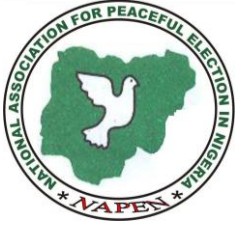
This report reveals also that while there is high possibility for electoral violence across Nigeria, there are also chances of minimal elections emanating from higher political awareness and the desire for change. All the thirty six (36) states and Abuja, the reported identified seventeen (17) states with high risk of electoral violence, sixteen (16) states with moderate risk of electoral violence and four (4) states as low risk states.

As obtained in advanced democracies situations as electoral violence ought to have merited greater attention from the government and electoral bodies. While the electoral law has made flimsy provisions on electoral violence, the enforcement channel is still very vague. Its unequivocal nature thus demands greater clarity and purpose. It has also slighted by its provision the scale of electoral violence in Nigeria. While the fine of 1million Naira and 3 years imprisonment as provided by the electoral law is a good start, it does not depict the extent of the damage already done by violence on Nigeria elections.



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