

# NIGER DELTA WATCH 2019

## *A citizen-led election observation project*

Report: Niger Delta Watch 2019 #10

Report published: 21 February 2019

Report period: 04 – 10 February 2019, and incidents during the weekend of February 16-17

## Summary

The major event this weekend was the last-minute postponement of the Presidential and National Assembly elections scheduled to take place on Saturday 16 February.

Our Observers tracked the stalling of key elections materials distribution at the Central Bank in Delta, Rivers and Akwa Ibom states. In each of the States, materials were still short on Friday evening, although it was not fully clear to party agents what was absent, and what the ramifications of this would be.

By late Friday evening the delay in materials meant that plans were being made and adjusted for overnight delivery of materials to Local Governments, with the inevitable knock-on delays of materials reaching polling units. Election materials never left the Central Bank in Rivers and Akwa Ibom states, as among other things, the proposed distribution was overtaken by discussions in Abuja.

Further to the announcement of the delay, reports from Observers so far indicate a general level of frustration, but only very limited examples of this translating into violence or incidents. It appears however that there has been a significant jump in distrust of the electoral commission and Federal Government agencies involved in the election. Allegations that the delay is driven by a voter suppression agenda have been circulating widely and getting a high level of engagement.

There are four main threads of initial reaction:

- Frustration highest among those who have travelled significant distances to vote in their home local governments.
- Conspiracy assertions – PDP spokespeople have specifically alleged plots to delay elections in sensitive states which lean towards the PDP.
- Celebrations of delay – APC supporters in Rivers (and some reports in Akwa Ibom) see the delay as giving them some hope of being reinserted on the ballot.
- Assumptions by analysts and others that the delay would be disadvantageous to the PDP because of the drain on its resources.

Some of the impacts anticipated from the delay:

- Lower levels of trust for all of the election institutions – such as INEC and the security services – and an increased tendency to attribute incidents to malign intent.
- Lower turnout for the second weekend seems inevitable with at least a reduction in those obliged to undertake significant travel to vote.

- All the main actors will face logistical and cost challenges relaunching their engagement with the elections, as well as the possibility of systemic failures, given the tight turnaround for the rescheduled polls.

Before providing our usual weekly breakdown of incidents, covering the week of 4 - 10 February, below are headlines concerning serious incidents reported immediately around February 16. This is not anticipated to be a complete list.

#### **Delta - major/high sensitivity incidents:**

- Lawrence Ngozi Akpomiemie, aide on security to Delta State governor, Ifeanyi Okowa, was shot dead on Friday night by unknown persons in Uvwie Local Government (Warri Town) – this is likely to lead to reprisals, with up to 17 people killed in the past three weeks in Uvwie.

#### **Rivers – major/high sensitivity incidents**

- In Okrika LGA ad-hoc INEC staff were not allowed to retrieve their uniforms on Friday night from the police station reportedly serving as a staging point for INEC, which was reportedly surrounded by the army. Claims regarding the cause of the blockade are still to be clarified, but are being interpreted locally as deliberately provocative in the context of other ‘blockading’ actions by security services in politically sensitive areas.
- Gokana LGA – five political party agents were arrested without explanation, although released shortly after the announcement of the postponement of the elections by INEC.
- Ahoada: the house of Senator Ideozu OSI ThankGod was attacked on Friday night. Shots were fired and dynamite was thrown in to the compound, although no casualties reported yet. In the morning, the gates were locked and no one was allowed access.
- Akuku-Toru: ‘serious gunshots’ were heard in Abonnema on Friday night, although no casualties reported. The Army stationed in the area has made arrests in response.

#### **Akwa Ibom - major/high sensitivity incidents**

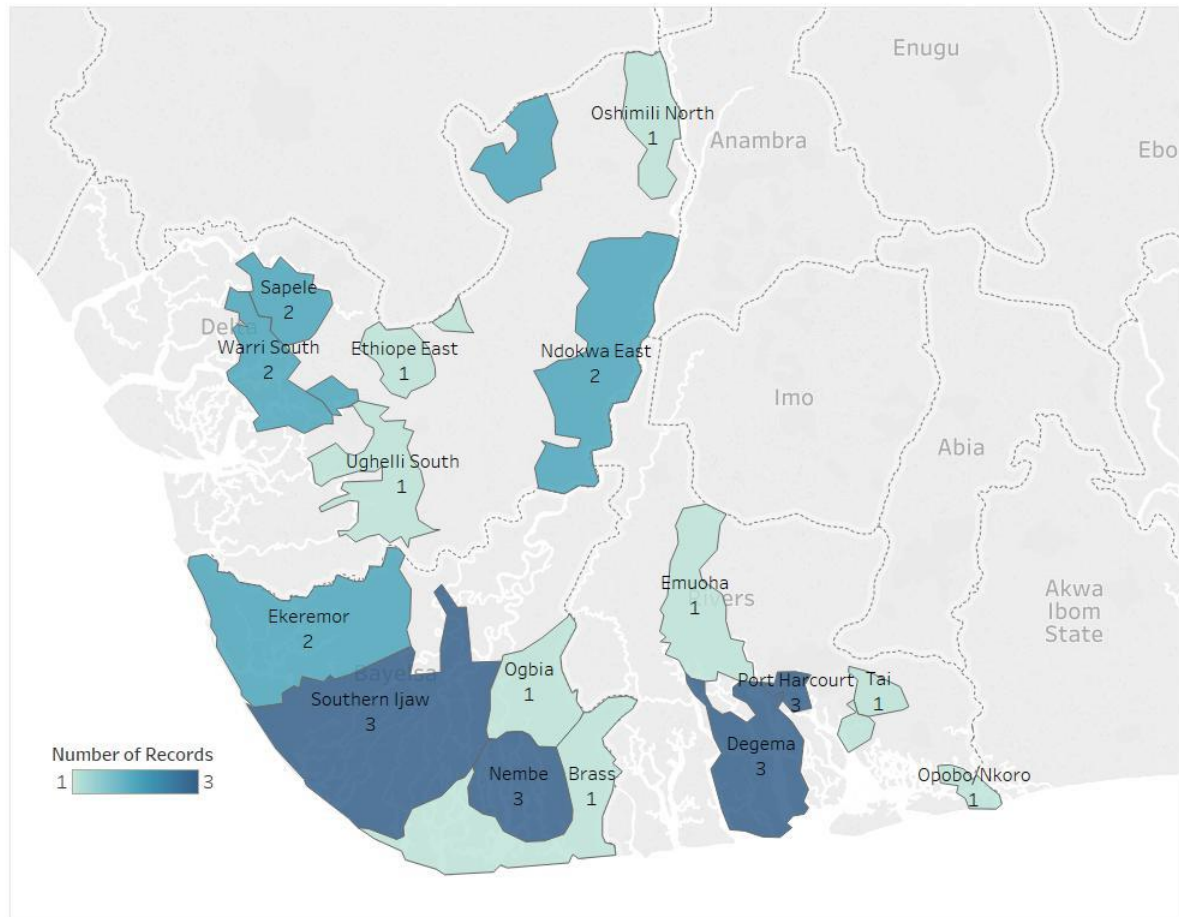
- Five vehicles assigned for delivery of election materials were vandalised and burnt in Obot Akara Local Government Area.
- Several LGAs including Mkpato Enin reported NGN 500,000 being distributed by the PDP to party members and supporters on Friday with some disputes arising. Similar amounts being attributed to APC in their own networks.

#### **Bayelsa – major/high sensitivity incidents**

- Nembe: there was reportedly serious gunfire near Ogbolomabiri from the military but no reports of casualties or injuries. APC supporters were also reported as being driven out of parts of Nembe with the situation later resolved.

## Regional overview

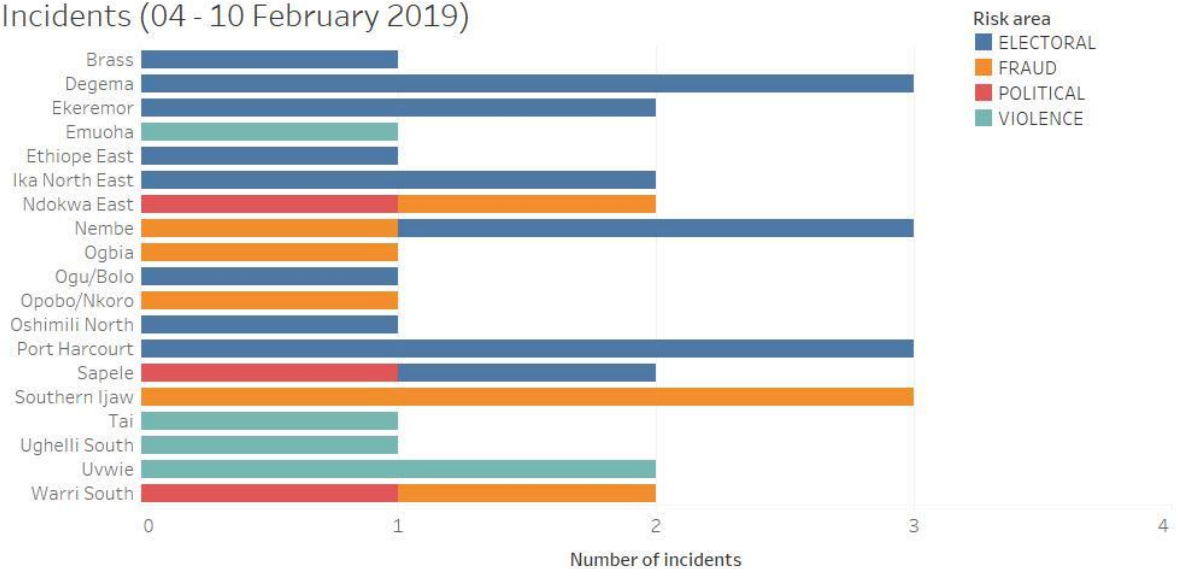
The following map shows the number of incidents reported in different Local Government Areas (LGAs) across Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers, between 04 and 10 February 2019.



The chart below shows incidents by risk area and LGA that were reported during the same period. In Southern Ijaw in Bayelsa State, there were three reported incidents of bribery. These involved APC campaign teams visiting Anyama, Igeibiri, Igbumatoru, Obololi and Olugbobiri towns and giving money to the community leadership.

Reports of campaign materials being destroyed came from Delta State and elsewhere, notably Sapele Town in Sapele LGA, Aboh Town in Ndokwa East LGA, and Ekurede Itsekiri in Warri South LGA. All of these involved the destruction of posters or billboards belonging to both People's Democratic Party (PDP) and APC members.

## Incidents (04 - 10 February 2019)



Election-related violence incidents, including fatalities were reported in Delta and Rivers. Uvwie LGA in Delta State has been a hotspot for violence, where trouble has occurred specifically on the fringes of Warri Town. We received 10 reported fatalities from two separate incidents in Uvwie during the reporting period. The first, on 6 February at Alaka, reportedly involved a reprisal attack on APC supporters by the PDP, resulting in five deaths and the closure of all commercial shops. The second fatal incident took place again at Alaka as well as Effurun community and involved a cult clash, supposedly instigated by the APC, during which five further people were killed and all shops placed on lockdown.

## Rivers

In the final weeks before the elections, electioneering continued across Rivers. Political parties, candidates and supporters made themselves even more visible in Port Harcourt and surrounding areas within the period. This resulted in ten relevant incidents reported under this project.

The uncertainty surrounding the potential exclusion of the opposition APC in Rivers State's continued to cause concern, as the Supreme Court handed down a verdict supporting the judgement of the High Court in Port Harcourt blocking the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) from permitting the APC to field candidates in the elections.

Also during the reporting period, Rivers State PDP Governor Nyesom Wike urged the international community to pay attention to the Nigerian general elections in order to prevent real or planned manipulation by the APC-led Federal Government. Wike alleged that the Federal Government plans to shut down internet and communication networks, making it impossible for the international community and stakeholders to monitor the elections.

Incidents during the week in review included:

- ❖ A PDP voter education rally in Tai LGA was disrupted by a group of young people, who besieged the venue of the community primary school in Nonwa. This led the police, who were with the LGA Chairman, to start shooting sporadically in the air in an attempt to dispatch the angry mob, who refused to leave despite the shooting.
- ❖ There was a cult clash in Emohua LGA, which led to the death of two people. As a result, a PDP ward-to-ward rally, which was meant to be held at Obelle ward 5, was suspended.
- ❖ In Degema LGA, a rally for the PDP candidate for Degema/Bonny Federal Constituency, Hon. Farah Dagogo, was reportedly suspended due to poor participation from members of the constituency, particularly the traditional leadership. Some supporters who came for the rally were chased away, as a way of expressing the dissatisfaction during Dagogo's last tenure as an Assembly member. The rally flopped as PDP supporters left out of anger.
- ❖ We received reports suspected to be linked to electoral fraud, as some men were accused of buying and selling photos belonging to individuals in ward 7 In Opobo town, Opobo/Nkoro LGA.

## Bayelsa

In the run up to the elections it appeared that events were heating up in Bayelsa, with indications that there might be serious irregularities. There were no indications that the violence in Sagbama would slow down, with retaliatory attacks recorded in the LGA in the past week. This has continued the recent trend of violence recorded there.

There are concerns that this could extend into Ekeremor during the elections. This is partially a result of the fact that the LGAs share the same senatorial district. The threat of violence could also affect turnout, and without a change in situation in Sagbama and Ekeremor this is likely to be low.

Elsewhere, the trend of tactical vote buying has continued in Southern Ijaw and there is a likelihood that this will be the case during the elections. Incidents of fraud were also recorded in Ogbia, although this is not necessarily a trend. Election activities in other parts of the state have been continuing peacefully.

Key incidents reported recently include:

- ❖ In Southern Ijaw, an APC campaign team with a State House of Assembly aspirant, a Senate aspirant and House of Representatives aspirant went on a community visit with their followers. The campaign was peaceful and there were no incidents, but at the end monies were given to the leadership groups in the communities.
- ❖ In Nembe, following the news from INEC that Permanent Voter Card collection would end on 11 February, voters with Temporary Voters Cards turned up at the INEC Secretariat in numbers to collect their PVCs with the assistance of political parties, who are providing them with free transportation from communities without transport access to the collection centres. While this report was being filed, people were still coming to the INEC office in both Ogbolomabiri and Bassambiri respectively to collect their PVCs. A good number of people have collected their PVCs and the collection is still ongoing.
- ❖ In Nembe, the Bayelsa East PDP campaign train, led by Hon. Jonathan Robinson Obuebite, came to Okoroama Clan, composed of ward 8, 9 and 10. The communities visited were Ologuama Town, Akakumama Town, Ekperiamama Town, Emina-Ama Town, Oguama Town, Dorgu Iwoama Town and Okoroama Town. All the PDP flag bearers for Nembe Local Government Area were present in the campaign. They said during the campaign that everyone should vote for PDP, noting that PDP is for Bayelsa and Bayelsa is for PDP.
- ❖ In Nembe, there was a massive celebration, canoe display, masquerade display, and different cultural dances and parade in commemoration of King Koko day, which is usually celebrated every 29 January. During the process, different political parties including the APC, PDP, ADC, Labour Party and Accord Party were donating money for the celebration in order to capture the minds of young people for the elections. Special gift items were given to the Chiefs.
- ❖ There are rumours that politicians are bringing arms illegally into Ekeremor and other LGAs in Bayelsa state. The Governor of Bayelsa state, Honourable Henry Dickson made this allegation during the flag off of PDP campaigns in Ekeremor Town. He said that he had information that APC leaders were stockpiling arms and bringing in drugs for young people in the state to enable them to perpetrate violence during the forthcoming elections. Note that a young APC supporter was shot dead last week during one of the political campaigns in

Sagbama. The Bayelsa West Senatorial District comprises Ekeremor and Sagbama, so prospective voters in the area have expressed fear that the elections might become violent. Some women contacted said that if they were not assured of adequate security, they might stay away from the polling booths.

- ❖ In Ekeremor, many prospective registered voters were still unable to collect their voter cards, which is causing fear, apprehension, and concerns that voters will be disenfranchised. Residents believe that INEC is deliberately hoarding PVCs so as to sell them to political parties during the election. A woman said that she saw several PVCs in the hands of a politician in the community.
- ❖ In Ogbia, ADC aspirants for the Houses of Assembly and Reps as well as the Senate visited the community leadership and gave their campaign promises. At the end of the campaign, men, women and young people were given some money to share as part of their campaign promises.
- ❖ In Brass, the Bayelsa East Restoration Campaign Organization led by the deputy governor of the state turned up at the local government headquarter of constituency 3 in numbers. The Deputy Governor spoke regarding the PDP administration, describing the elections as critical and asking the people of the communities to vote massively for the PDP. He said that if elected all the candidates representing the party would make Nigeria and Bayelsa work again.



## Delta

This week saw intense political activity by various parties in Delta State. Serious election violence took place, with people killed in Uvwie. Billboards were also reported to have been destroyed as the campaign intensified. Equally, despite the extension of the deadline for Permanent Voter Card collection INEC, it appears some of the electorate will be disenfranchised due to hitches at the collection centre in Ethiope East LGA.

The PDP, APC, APGA and AAC (African Action Congress) were reported to have embarked on rigorous campaigns, specifically towards traditional rulers, whose trust is gained in order to get them to ask their subjects to vote for a particular party. For example, in Umunede, the traditional ruler, Obi of Umunede (Agadagidi) encouraged his subjects to vote the present government of Okowa back into office.

Similarly, the Obi of Owa (Efeizomor) embarked on a campaign tour of the seven communities in Owa kingdom, sensitising residents on why Senator Okowa should be massively voted for come March. At the palace of King Orosue of OkereUrhobo, Chief Thomas Eriyitomi encouraged the king to mobilise his people to vote for him and other PDP candidates. It was also reported that he spent NGN 30,000 to purchase banana and groundnut which he shared among participants at the meeting.

Specific incidents during the latest reporting period include:

- ❖ Two incidents in Uvwie LGA led to the death of 10 people. The first incident, on 6 February at Alaka, was a reprisal attack by the PDP which resulted in the murder of five APC supporters. The second incident took place on 10 February at Alaka and Effurun and involved a cult clash instigated by the APC, resulting in five further fatalities. There was a lot of tension in the community with all shops placed on lockdown.
- ❖ In Ethiope East, electorates yet to collect their PVCs went to the INEC office in numbers from their respective wards, complaining about the slow process of INEC's operations and that, with the election days away, they might be denied their right to vote.
- ❖ In Ika North-East, campaigning by the PDP, APC, APGA and AAC intensified across all wards. Young people from Otolokpo decried the lack of infrastructural development in their community, arguing that they have been working for the PDP for years and supporting the Governor without any meaningful development.
- ❖ In other developments, the Obi of Umunede (Agadagidi) encouraged his subjects to vote to return the present government of Okowa back into office.

The Obi of Owa (Efeizomor) embarked on a campaign tour around the seven communities in Owa Kingdom, sensitising residents on why Senator Okowa should be massively voted for come March. Ika Movies Practitioners of Nigeria, convened by Percy Monday Edokiopenly, declared their support for Okowa's Victory. He advised the people to be resolute and support Gov. Okowa and other PDP. Okowa was endorsed by the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), Delta State Chapter, for a second term. According to the Chairman of PFN in the state, the "PFN is solidly with Gov. Okowa. Anyone who casts his vote for someone else is on his own." Urging a mobilisation of the people, he added that the 25 LGAs of Delta State are happy to support Gov. Okowa.



- ❖ In Ndokwa East, the APC held a peaceful campaign rally featuring governorship candidate, Deputy Governor, House of Representatives, Senate and the three House of assembly members. At the meeting after the rally, the party faithful were given money. The following day, APC billboards at Aboh junction were destroyed.
- ❖ In Oshimili North, Hon Odikpo Nwayobuijeuwa Eleazar, APC Candidate for House of Assembly Oshimili North Constituency, flagged off his campaign in his home ward Akwukwu-Igbo. He paid a courtesy visit to His Royal Majesty Obi Azuka to seek blessings and urged the community to give him a block vote as deserved, with a hope to better AkwukwuAtuma.
- ❖ In Warri South, the PDP House of Representative aspirant for Warri South constituency, 1 Chief Thomas Eriyitomi and his entourage (Matthew Oporu and other Warri South PDP faithful) paid a visit to King Orosue of Okere-Urhobo at his palace at Ejemudaro regarding the coming elections. He urged the king to mobilise his people to vote for him and other PDP candidates. Banana and groundnut worth around NGN 30,000 were shared among the party faithful and those around.
- ❖ On 8 February, the Warri South PDP Chairman was reportedly shot by masked men on the way to his office around Cele Road, Ajamimogha. The victim is currently receiving treatment in a hospital.
- ❖ Still in Warri South, in a more recent development, on 13 February, there was reported fighting between young people at a meeting held in the compound of the former Delta State Governor, Emmanuel Uduaghan. It was alleged that Uduaghan invited youths from all the communities in Warri South to mobilise them for the coming elections. At the end of the meeting, NGN 40,000 was given to each of the communities, supposedly for transport. This created conflict and violence between the young people from the community. Uduaghan also promised them that they will be mobilised financially before election day.
- ❖ In Sapele town, the APC gubernatorial candidate Great Ogboru took his campaign trail to Sapele. Members of the APC, and various support groups came out in numbers to show their support for the candidate. Meanwhile, some PDP supporters were seen on the sidelines mocking the massive crowd, but the APC supporters seemed not to pay them any attention. In another development PDP supporters were seen destroying PAC posters along the Sapele-Warri road.

## Akwa Ibom

During the week under review, electioneering campaigns by political parties in the state became more intense. These involved visits by candidates of the major parties to the 31 local government areas and the hosting of local government-level and ward-level campaign rallies. A key feature of these rallies have been the sharing of cash and other material inducements, which in many cases degenerated into fights over who got what.

The campaigns of the leading political parties have generally been peaceful and without major incident. However, key actors in the opposition APC and the ruling PDP have been unrelenting in the use of inflammatory speech and unguarded utterances during their campaigns. Social media continues to be actively employed by the political rumour mill and peddlers of inflammatory speech across party divides. There have also been pockets of misconduct by political parties, mainly the destruction of campaign materials such billboards and posters.

A major development in the political scene was the news on the rumoured redeployment of INEC's State Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC), Mike Igini. For some time, both parties have been accusing each other of plotting to get Igini redeployed from the state due to his reputation as a highly disciplined officer. The accusations against the APC have been stronger as it is thought the latter may be attempting to pull party strings in Abuja to get Igini redeployed. INEC rejected the redeployment story and insisted that Igini is still the REC for Akwa Ibom.

Another trending story was the signing of a peace accord at the instance of INEC by various political parties in the state. The event was almost marred when the candidate of the APC was prevented from gaining access to the venue through the main entrance by aides of Governor Udom Emmanuel on grounds of breach of protocol.

Vote buying continues to present in different guises, the latest one being free medical outreach to communities. During these events, names of beneficiaries and voter identification numbers (VINs) are collected by party agents, although it is unclear how they will be used. Just a few weeks to the elections, the state government through the Hospital Management Board is offering free medical services to citizens of the state, billed to take place in its ten federal constituencies. Many have interpreted it as another form of inducing support from voters.

Incidents this week are as follows:

- ❖ In Onna, on 4 February, the LGA Chairman set about campaigning for votes along with other local PDP stalwarts. The event included voters from the villages of Okat, Mkpok, Ndon Eyo, Ikot Ndua Iman, Ikot Nkan. They later gave the sum of NGN 200,000 to each of the five villages urging them to vote for all PDP candidates in the upcoming general elections.
- ❖ Also on 4 February, youths and Elders of Ikwe village disrupted a PDP campaign rally and destroyed property. Trouble broke out when an acting village head in the area was erroneously recognised as the substantive village head. Youths of the area broke chairs and destroyed tents causing everyone, including candidates who had come to campaign, to run for safety. Normalcy was later restored in the premises by political leaders and the security agencies.

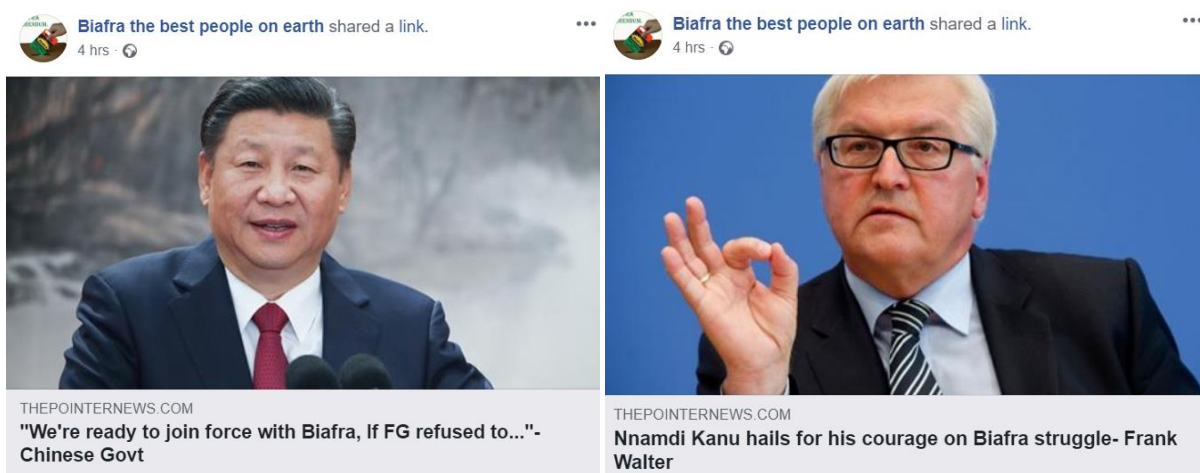
- ❖ On 5 February, PDP supporters in Mkpok village denied APC House of Representatives candidate in the general election, Mr. Kufre Alex, access to their village hall for his campaigns.
- ❖ In Ukunafun on 7 February, PDP supporters went to Ikot Akpa Nkuk primary school on the eve of the APC Governorship campaign rally to stop the event managers from setting up a stage in preparation for the rally. The fracas resulted in the death of one person.
- ❖ On 8 February, youths of Ikot Edeghe village raised the alarm over continuous harassment by Lady Valerie Ebe, an APC chieftain and former deputy governor of the state and her son, Anietie Ebe, over the support of most of the community's youth for the PDP and efforts by Lady Ebe and her son to impose someone loyal to the APC as the president of the Village Youth Council. Lady Ebe, who recently defected to the APC, is said to be using the police and cultists to intimidate youths and elders of the area in order to get her way during the General Elections.
- ❖ In Mkpato Enin, in preparation for the APC Gubernatorial rally in the LGA on Monday 11 February 2019, State Youth Leader of the APC, Stephen Ntukekpo, reportedly ordered youths in the area to remove the billboards of the local PDP gubernatorial candidate, Udom Emmanuel, which were very conspicuous. Many billboards were destroyed.
- ❖ In Uruan on 11 February, PDP supporters from Uyo senatorial district took to the village of Ibiaku Uruan to canvass support for their senatorial candidate, Senator Bassey Albert, in the forthcoming elections. Bags of rice branded with the senator's campaign messages were distributed during the tour.
- ❖ The PDP in Uyo has accused the APC in Akwa Ibom of planning to issue fake ballot and result sheets during the elections. It is reported that some youths have been contracted to do the thumb printing in an undisclosed location. Key leaders of the party, such as Senator Godswill Akpabio and Obong Nsima Ekere, have also been accused of interfering with the electoral process, as they too promised to see that the Akwa Ibom INEC REC is redeployed in a bid to give their party safe landing in the elections.
- ❖ There have also been allegations from the PDP that APC leaders are planning to set up fake police formations and personnel to implicate and arrest key PDP leaders ahead of the polls.

## Social media

This week has seen a number of political pages on social media attempting to influence the narrative around the elections, with an overall increase in activity sharing unreliable and polarised content, such as content aiming at boycotting the elections, discrediting political opponents and confusing voter opinions.

One such group is the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), which has many Facebook pages and is encouraging a boycott of the 2019 elections, as it has done with previous votes. A network of pages associated with the Biafra secessionist movement have spread a number of pieces of false information via unofficial media outlets.

On 13 February, 2019, the 'Biafra the best people on earth' Facebook page shared two links with false information from the news outlet 'The Pointer News', suggesting that world leaders from [Germany](#) and [China](#) support the creation of a Biafran state. While the page itself does not have a significant number of likes, the page replicates content that is being highly shared on other Facebook pages affiliated with Biafran groups.



On 6 February, 2019, the page IBOP World News 24/7 tweeted a [story](#) about the closing of schools in Bayelsa as a result of politicians kidnapping children (see below).

Our observer has inferred that the incident is false, as there were no reports of schools in Bayelsa being closed due to cases of kidnapping. While there have been cases of children being kidnapped, there is no knowledge that this is the handiwork of politicians (people are attributing it to ritualists). This news can create tension and discourage people from participating fully in the electoral processes, which appears to be the intention.



IPOB WORLD NEWS 24/7  
@ipobworldnews

Follow

### #BreakingNews!

most schools in Bayelsa have been shutdown right now ,the politicians are kidnapping our children from their place of study parents are now running to pick their children from their various school.about seven(7) pupils are missing.

Report From Bayelsa Media.



3:29 pm - 5 Feb 2019

96 Retweets 17 Likes



4 96 17

Taken together, such posts, while having not been widely shared on social media at the time of reporting, are important to highlight as the movement has been doing similar activity in other states. This therefore appears to be part of a broader, coordinated strategy to discredit the elections.

Another social media page that has been active in posting election-related content is Rethink Nigeria. Rethink Nigeria has been sponsoring lots of political ads and receiving a large amount of attention from users on their Facebook page. At the time of writing, the page had several active targeted ads. Among them was a narrative saying that President Buhari's wife is accused of running away with campaign money; this was not reported by major newspapers nor does it present official sources. At the time of the report, the [post](#) (below) had 2.4 thousand likes and 140 shares.



Rethink Nigeria

Sponsored ·

### Aisha Buhari Accused of Running Away with Presidential Campaign Money

The First Lady of Nigeria; Hajia Aisha Buhari had earlier warned the President; her Husband, that if things continued the way it was under his administration, that she will not campaign for his second term bid. She said this because she felt her husband's government has been hijacked by a few people and went on to accuse the President of not knowing most of the people he appointed. That was what led to the ... [See More](#)





Other posts and sponsored ads suggest that the page is partisan, campaigning against the APC. It is not clear who is behind such posts.

A story about the APC broom received a lot of attention on social media this week. It showed a giant model of the APC logo – a broom – which is used at APC rallies and symbolises ‘sweeping up corruption’ in Nigeria. However, APC responded to this [news](#), saying that they were not responsible.



A third page active on social media in sharing election news and receiving a lot of attention is the Garden City Gazette. The page was created in January and only posts political content. It therefore appears to be set up primarily to influence the online narrative around the 2019 elections. The [post](#) below by the Garden City Gazette discusses controversy around Rivers State Governor Nyesom Wike's birth certificate. It was alleged that the certificate of birth of Governor Nyesom Wike, submitted to INEC on 2 November 2018 for clearance to participate in the 2019 General Elections, was forged.



Other key stories on social media during the week in review came from the Sahara Reporters Facebook page. The page [tweeted](#) about the relaunch of the operation Doo-Akpo security outfit by the Bayelsa State Governor only days before the election. Rumours have been circulating in Bayelsa that the Governor might use the security outfit in his favour during the election. The Sahara Reporters Facebook page and other media also posted a [story](#) about the APC Party Chairman Adams Oshomole being stoned at the APC Ogun State campaign rally for President Buhari.

## Ethnic tensions

A major topic of discussion over the week in review has been the question of whether Governor Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State will remain for a second term in power. Delta state is 'zoned' politically into different regions, and this political segregation has been linked to ethnic tensions. There are concerns that these will increase if the opposition, APC candidate Chief Ogburu, wins the 2019 gubernatorial election.

Ethnic issues have been flaring up elsewhere over the reporting week in discussions around the elections as, in a separate incident, on 4 February, author and lawyer Reno Omokri posted a [video](#) of Festus Keyamo –Director of Strategic Communications of President Buhari's campaign – making statements that displayed and appeared to encourage tribal antagonism.

Discussing the APC election strategy, Keyamo seemed to insinuate that the Yoruba people would rather support the current (APC) Nigerian Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbano, on ethnic grounds, after learning that the Ohaneze ethnic group declared support for PDP Vice Presidential Candidate, Peter Obi, in October 2018.

Keyamo then makes a derogatory remark about Peter Obi, dubbing him 'a China man'. Reno urged his followers to retweet his own post to reject tribal politics. Many people expressed their displeasure in Keyamo's statements while praying for a united country with no tribal animosity.



Reno Omokri  
@renoomokri

Follow

"Yoruba cant be foolish to see Ohaneze endorsing their son and keep quiet and say they will go and support that son. A senior advocate of Nigeria, a renowned professor, they will now leave him for a China man?"

Please RETWEET to reject TRIBAL politics  
[#KeyamoIsNotWellUpstairs](#)



2:37 AM - 4 Feb 2019

1,456 Retweets 851 Likes



374 1.5K 851

## Arms distribution in Rivers State

Rumours circulated on Facebook this week that the current Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi, has procured arms and ammunitions and distributed them to criminals and cultists to support the rigging of the elections in Rivers State and Ikwerre LGA in particular. This [post](#) (below) is an example, which was also shared by the Rivers PDP Facebook page.



< **Vicky Thompson** ...  
Tuesday at 9:41 PM · 🌐

The Executive Chairman of Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State, Hon Engr Samuel Nwanosike has called on the European Union Elections group to focus on Ikwerre LGA, the LGA of the Director General of the Buhari Campaign Organisation, former Governor of Rivers State and Current Minister for Transportation, Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi as he has purchased Arms and ammunitions and distributed it to criminals and cultists to ensure that he Rigs the 2019 General Elections in the state and Ikwerre Local Government Area in particular.

He disclosed this information to EU Elections observers who are on a fact

< **Vicky Thompson's Post** ...

purchased Arms and ammunitions and distributed it to criminals and cultists to ensure that he Rigs the 2019 General Elections in the state and Ikwerre Local Government Area in particular.

He disclosed this information to EU Elections observers who are on a fact finding mission to the LGA.

Watch and Share 📌📌📌



In the video, Samuel Nwanosike, who is a PDP chieftain and the chairman of Ikwerre LGA, is seen discussing with the EU team on issues surrounding the upcoming elections. During these discussions, Nwanosike says that the Minister of Transport, Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, has distributed arms and ammunition to criminals and cultists in a bid to rig the Rivers State elections.

It is unclear whether this allegation is true, as further investigation into the story pulled up no further results. However, we have heard verbal rumours of this elsewhere, and a similar story was reported by one of our election observers this week about politicians illegally bringing arms into Ekeremor and other LGAs in Bayelsa State.

## About Niger Delta Watch 2019

Niger Delta Watch 2019 is a citizen-led elections observation project reporting on the 2019 Nigerian presidential and governorship elections. The project focuses on the states of Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, and Akwa Ibom. It is a joint initiative of Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN) and the Civil Society Situation Room (CSSR), and builds on previous election observation work carried out by SDN, including during the 2011 and 2015 election cycles.

The goal of Niger Delta Watch 2019 is to generate accurate information on the election campaign as it unfolds, for the benefit of the Nigerian government, its electoral agencies, and journalists, researchers, civil society organisations and others working to support democracy in Nigeria.

The project's reporting is based on information generated and analysed by approximately 100 citizen Election Observers, Data Analysts, and Social Media Analysts.

Please visit [www.stakeholderdemocracy.org/elections2019](http://www.stakeholderdemocracy.org/elections2019) for more information on all aspects of this project, including how the reports are produced. We are also keen to hear how the reports could be made more useful.

**Disclaimer:** *this report is produced as part of a Niger Delta elections observation project being led by SDN in partnership with the Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room. The project is funded by the UK's Department for International Development. Please note that the information and analysis contained in the report do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the British government.*

*Note that the information and analysis contained in these reports do not represent the views of any one organisation. SDN and CSSR have made efforts to ensure that the information is accurate, but will aim to correct any errors or omissions as new information emerges.*

*The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) was consulted for training in data management and visualisation for this project. Democracy Reporting International led the training of Election Observers participating in this project.*

