Summary

This is the 13th weekly report of Niger Delta Watch 2019, which has been reporting on the political environment during the months over the election period in four Niger Delta States – Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta and Akwa Ibom. The week in review covered events in the week following the Governorship Elections, 11-17 March 2019.

In Rivers, there was a protest in Port Harcourt Local Government Area (LGA), following the suspension of the Governorship and Assembly elections, by members of the All Progressive Congress (APC) / African Action Congress (AAC) coalition. The major fall-out of the suspension has been propaganda, accusations and counter accusations from the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), the APC/AAC Coalition and the 6 division of the Nigerian army. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is proposing to resume collation of results in Rivers State between 2 and 5 April with a space for presumed ‘rerun’ elections on Saturday 13 April. Also this week, in Khana LGA, a man died after being shot by members of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) at Bori collation centre on 10 March, exacerbating pre-existing tensions in the area.

The situation in Bayelsa has been relatively peaceful and calm. Following the irregularities that marred the elections in some parts of the State, the victories of some candidates are being challenged at the election petition tribunal. The results of the State House of Assembly Elections are also being challenged. These elections were declared inconclusive in three state constituencies due to violence and electoral equipment failure. Supplementary elections were held on Saturday 23 March in Southern Ijaw Constituency IV and Ogbia Constituency II. The election in Brass Constituency I was suspended due to a Court ruling on Friday 22 March. The elections on 23 March were mostly peaceful, although there were areas, such as Ward 16 in Southern Ijaw, where there were reports of hijacking of election materials. The two Constituencies were successfully concluded and results collated, with the PDP candidates winning in both. Voter turnout was poor and there was a large presence of security personnel. In Yenagoa LGA, three police officers were killed in an isolated incident on Friday 15 March.

In Delta, there have been numerous incidents of violence, with reports emerging from Ughelli South, Ukwuani and Uvwie LGAs. In Ughelli South, there were multiple battles between APC and PDP members; in Ukwuani, there was conflict over money; and in Uvwie, the violence was cult-related. Fatalities were reported in Ughelli South and Uvwie.

The week following the Gubernatorial and State House of Assembly Elections in Akwa Ibom witnessed the announcement of results followed by accusations and counter-accusations by the two leading parties (APC and PDP). The Governorship Election result was announced, with the PDP candidate Udom Emmanuel emerging victorious. While members of the PDP are basking in the euphoria of their victory, those of the APC have decided to challenge the outcome of the elections at...
the tribunal. The week has also witnessed the redeeming of cash pledges by politicians who had made vote buying commitments earlier during the elections.

This week on social media, there has been much discussion surrounding the integrity of the elections. Rumours have been circulating about INEC rigging the elections, leading to further speculation about fraud, money giving and general misconduct from multiple online sources. Many people are unhappy about the way in which the elections were conducted, and have taken to social media to voice their opinions.

Please continue to check http://www.stakeholderdemocracy.org/elections2019/ for news and updates.
Regional summary

Over the week in review (11-17 March 2019), we received incident reports relating to ‘election preparations, procedures and standards’ and ‘election-related violence’ from the following LGAs:

![Map of LGAs](image)

We received fewer reports this week. With most elections over, there were no reports of fraud, bribery or vote buying, nor did we receive any reports relating to political party misconduct.

There were eight reported fatalities – these were in Khana, Yenagoa, Uvwie and Ughelli South. Three fatalities each came from Ughelli South and Yenagoa. Three policemen were shot while on duty in a single incident in Yenagoa, while the fatalities in Ughelli South came from two separate incidents – two civilians were targets of sporadic shooting by an APC leader in Oviri Olomu after it was announced that PDP had won the election there, and APC members killed a PDP member in Iwhreka community after grievance over unshared campaign funds led to violence.
Rivers

Over the week in review, there was a protest in Port Harcourt LGA by members of the APC/AAC coalition, following the suspension of the Governorship and Assembly elections. A man died in hospital in Khana LGA on 16 March after being shot by members of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) at Bori collation centre on 10 March. This has exacerbated pre-existing tensions in the area.

Incidents from the reporting period are detailed below:

Port Harcourt

- INEC announced that the violence and alleged interference by the military, which put a halt to the collation of results on Sunday 10 March after the Governorship election. Collation activities were suspended indefinitely. As a result, members of the APC/AAC took to the streets of Port Harcourt and the INEC office at Aba Road on 11 March, protesting that their governorship candidate be declared as the winner of the election. The protests last for almost two hours and disrupted movement across Rumuola, waterlines and GRA junction. The army and police eventually came out and barricaded the roads and dispersed the protesters. Citizens were ordered to raise up their hands while passing through the barricades.

Khana

- A young academic, Dr Ferry Gbragba, was shot reportedly by men of the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS) Rivers State command on Sunday morning, 10 March, at the INEC collation centre in Bori. Accounts of the incident are alleging that Chief Greg Nwidam was involved in triggering the security services response and that the state SARS Commander, ACP Akin Farokode was leading the SARS team. Dr Gbaragba was a senior lecturer at Kenpoly, a state-owned polytechnic at Bori, and an officer of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). He was also the PDP collation officer in the Governorship Election in Khana LGA. It has been confirmed that he later died on 16 March.

MOSOP had earlier issued a statement after the shooting, expressing displeasure over the acts and its perpetrators. As expressed by the long term observer “We cannot tell what the next point will be; this sad news makes security personnel within Ogoni vulnerable as Dr Ferry may be seen as one of Ogoni’s best and brightest who does not deserve such violent treatment from the security agents.”

Post-election events

The major fall-out of the suspension has been propaganda, accusations and counter accusations coming from PDP, APC/AAC Coalition and the 6 division of the Nigerian army. The APC/AAC have accused INEC of siding with the PDP to manipulate the results and urging INEC to declare. The PDP has accused INEC of wanting to change the results in favour of the AAC, after they failed to declare the results after the 48-hour suspension. The PDP also urged INEC to declare the results based on the already declared units and wards results from 17 LGAs where the PDP claimed to have won with a very high margin. The 6 division of the Nigerian Army, reacting to their alleged involvement in the disruption of electoral processes, accused INEC’s fact finding team of being biased in their findings; and focused on a particular incident where they alleged Governor Wike had led a group of supporters and security personnel, injuring two soldiers on the perimeter of Obio Akpor Collation
Other incidents included the following:

- The Governorship candidate of the AAC in Rivers State, Engr. Awara Biokpomabo Festus, is seeking an injunction against INEC, restraining the commission from further counting and collating or declaring anyone winner of the 9 March Governorship Election in Rivers State.

- The INEC fact finding commission on the suspended Rivers State Governorship and Assembly Elections expressed their displeasure in a press release with the role played by some soldiers and armed gangs who disrupted the collation process and attempted to subvert the will of the people.

- In a counter press release, the headquarters of 6 division of the Nigerian Army expressed dismay and a sense of betrayal in the statement by INEC as a lack of trust in an institution which it said has sacrificed a lot in the course pf performing its duties.

- Pro-APC members and elders working for former governor of Rivers State and APC member, Rotimi Amaechi, wrote a letter to President Buhari urging him to transfer the INEC officials that conducted the Rivers elections. 88 political parties under the auspices of Rivers State Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC), in a press conference, hit back at the pro-APC.

- A federal high court sitting in Abuja has declined an AAC application to issue an ex parte order INEC to stop the planned collation, announcement of results, and any further activity of the Rivers State Governorship and House of Assembly Elections.

INEC is proposing to resume collation of results in Rivers State between 2 and 5 April with a space for presumed ‘rerun’ elections on Saturday 13 April.
Bayelsa

Following the irregularities that marred the elections in some parts of the state, the victory of some candidates are being challenged at the election petition tribunal. This includes, for example, the APC candidate for Sagbama/Ekeremor Federal Constituency, who has vowed to challenge the victory of the PDP candidate in the area, claiming that his mandate was stolen. Similarly, the PDP candidate for Southern Ijaw Federal Constituency, Rt. Hon Konbowei Benson, has refused to concede defeat in the elections, vowing to challenge the victory of the APC candidate in court. The results of the State House of Assembly elections in the area are also being challenged. The areas with similar issues include (but are not limited to) Brass and Nembe LGAs.

There was an isolated case of violence that claimed the lives of three police officers in Yenagoa. Otherwise, the state has been relatively peaceful and calm.

Key Incidents from the week of 11-17 March are as follows:

Ekeremor

- APC candidate for Sagbama/Ekeremor Federal Constituency in the last elections visited his home town of Peretoru and informed the community of his intention to proceed to the courts to claim his stolen mandate from the PDP candidate, who was declared winner of the elections. When people from Age, the home town of the PDP candidate, heard that the APC is going to court, they threatened that if APC uses federal might to upturn the results, they will do whatever possible to ensure that their mandate is not stolen.

Yenagoa

- On Friday 15 March, three policemen were killed – one at Joepal supermarket, Amarata, and two at Udime Hotels, along Alamoyoeseigha Road. The policemen were on duty when the killers attacked and then fled with the policemen’s guns.

Ogbia

- After the House of Assembly Election, political gatherings were visible in every. The PDP celebrated the election results as they fell in their favour while other parties, particularly the APC, remained quiet. Members of the PDP started moving in groups to the aspirant’s residence in Ibelebiri to facilitate with her, since they considered she was going to win.

Coverage of 23 March elections

The Bayelsa State House of Election was held on 9 March 2019; unfortunately, out of the 24 State Constituencies, three were declared inconclusive. This was due to a number of reasons, including failure to use smart card readers and incidents of violence. Supplementary elections were scheduled for 23 March in Brass Constituency I, Ogbia Constituency II, and Southern Ijaw Constituency IV. Details of the outcome of these elections are discussed below:

The three affected State Constituencies are:

- **Brass Constituency I (SC/137/BY)**
  It has 21 PUs with 6,585 registered voters. About 6,235 PVCs have been collected. For the affected PUs (011, 012, 013, 014, 015 and 016), number of registered voters is 2,076 and a
total of 1,774 PVCs have been collected. The candidate of the APC has 1,194 votes and is in first place, followed by the candidate of the PDP with 877 votes.

- **Ogbia Constituency II (SC/144/BY)**
  The constituency is made up of: Otuokpoti (02), Ologi (03), Anyama (04) and Okodi (05). It has 85 PUs, out of which 65 were affected. Total number of registered voters is 25,117 and 23,474 PVCs have been collected. From the PUs that has been collated, the PDP candidate is taking the lead with 3,278 votes followed by the Accord Party candidate with 631 votes.

- **Southern Ijaw IV (SC/160/BY)**
  The affected registration areas are: Ukubie (16) and Koluama (17). A total of 53 PUs with a total of 31,077 registered voters. A total of 30,981 PVCs have been collected. For the results that have already been collated, the candidate of the APC has 20,085 votes in first position, while in second place is the candidate of the PDP with 17,584 votes.

**Summary Report**

The supplementary elections were conducted in two out of the three Constituencies – Southern Ijaw Constituency IV and Ogbia Constituency II. The election in Brass Constituency I was suspended due to a Court ruling on Friday 22 March 2019.

The elections were largely peaceful although there were areas such as Ward 16 in Southern Ijaw were there were alleged reports of hijacking of election materials. These reports could not be substantiated at the time of reporting because of difficulty in accessing and communicating with people on the ground on the election day.

The two Constituencies were successfully concluded and results collated with the PDP candidates winning in both Constituencies.

Generally, voter turnout was poor and there was a large presence of security personnel.

Finally, due to the observed irregularities during the process, there are signals that we may see a large number of post-election court cases. Many of the parties and their candidates are gearing up for litigation in election tribunals.
**Delta**

Over the week in review, there have been numerous incidents of violence, with reports emerging from Ughelli South, Ukwuani and Uvwie LGAs. In Ughelli South, there were multiple battles between APC and PDP members; in Ukwuani, conflict was over money; and in Uvwie, the violence was cult-related. Fatalities were reported in Ughelli South and Uvwie.

Key incidents over the week are as follows:

**Bomadi**

- An election observer covering this LGA said that an APC party agent, offered money to write an anti-PDP report concerning the election. At least one senior candidate has allegedly indicated that he is willing to pay any price to observers willing to cooperate in releasing damming reports on the PDP victory.

**Ughelli South**

- In Iwhreka community, towards the end of voting in Jeremi ward 1 unit 8, APC members reportedly killed a PDP member. Grievance over unshared campaign funds in the community escalated the action that led to the death of the PDP member.

- At Oviri Olomu community, PDP members were dancing from street to street celebrating their victory. This aggravated the Otota (spokesperson) of Oviri community, who is an APC member, and led him to start shooting frantically, killing a young boy and a PDP man who were hit by stray bullets. The Ototawas arrested, but later granted bail reportedly with support from an APC leader using Federal powers.

**Ukwuani**

- The APC Youth leader in Owah-Abbi community was given an undisclosed amount of money to share with APC young people of the said community, but he kept the money for himself. On the day of the Governorship and House of Assembly Elections, the angry young people fought the youth leader, which almost affected the elections in that community, before community leaders intervened.

**Uvwie**

- A 28-year-old man was reportedly shot dead by unknown gun men in the morning of February 16. Also, post-election cult-related clashes continue to pervade the area as the Highlander and Buccaneer cult groups fight each other.
Akwa Ibom

The week following the Gubernatorial and State House of Assembly Elections witnessed the announcement of results followed by accusations and counter-accusations by the two leading parties (APC and PDP). The Governorship Election result was announced, with the PDP candidate Udom Emmanuel emerging victorious. While members of the PDP are basking in the euphoria of their victory, those of the APC have decided to challenge the outcome of the elections at the tribunal. The week has also witnessed the redeeming of cash pledges by politicians who had made vote buying commitments earlier during the elections.

The following incidents occurred between 11-17 March in Akwa Ibom State:

Uyo

- It is alleged that Udo Matthew, ward chairman of APC in Uyo urban ward 2, was given NGN 2 million naira for vote buying in the ward but he never disbursed the same to the party’s supporters and others who cast their votes for the APC. Supporters later stormed his house, during the week following the elections, demanding for their own share of the money and threatening to burn down his property.

- The PDP has called for the arrest of APC Governorship Candidate, Nsima Ekere, and Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial Candidate, Godswill Akpabio, claiming that APC agents hijacked materials at the voting units in Independence High School, in Essien Udim, and that thugs and policemen sympathetic to Senator Akpabio mounted the gates and prevented PDP supporters from gaining access to the venue. According to PDP members, the thugs also attacked and chased away a reporter who was covering the elections. The PDP blamed the delay in announcing the results from Essien Udim LGA was as a result of the interference of Akpabio.

- The PDP made further claims that, in Ikot Abasi LGA, APC thugs took off with electoral materials to Ekere’s residence, where they did thumb-printing. According to the party spokesperson, there was photographic evidence showing armed soldiers arranging the voting queue to ensure that PDP supporters did not vote in Nsima Ekere’s unit. The spokesperson also claimed that thugs hijacked ballot boxes and electoral personnel in units 2, 6 and other units in Ward 7, and delivered them to the residence of Ekere.

- At a press conference in Uyo urban ward 2, APC officials, led by State Chairman Mr Ini Okopido, rejected the election results and declared the election a ‘sham’. He said the APC in the State lacked confidence in INEC, deeming the commission corrupt and tied to the Akwa Ibom State Government. The party accused INEC of partnering with the PDP to change election figures, claiming that the APC won in 26 out of the 31 LGAs and that the final figures released by INEC differed to those counted at polling units in the State.

Mkpat Enin

- On 17 March, Mr. Victor Ekwere, the House of Assembly Member-elect for Mkpat Enin State Constituency shared the sum of NGN 5,000 each to everybody in his village, Esa Ekpo, who supported and voted for him and other PDP candidates during the last elections.
Social media

This week on social media, there has been much discussion surrounding the integrity of the elections. Rumours have been circulating about INEC rigging the elections, leading to further speculation about fraud, money giving and general misconduct from multiple online sources. Many people are unhappy about the way in which the elections were conducted, and have taken to social media to voice their opinions.

**INEC accused of election rigging**

Various sources have been spreading false information about INEC having manipulated electoral results in favour of Buhari. The source of the rumours appears to be the website Facts don’t lie Nigeria, directing users to a database supposedly containing the actual results of the elections. The website was allegedly created by a member of staff from INEC and contains images of the INEC servers as well as other data apparently leaked from INEC.

![Image of the Real Results of the 2019 Nigeria Presidential election]

The Real Results of the 2019 Nigeria Presidential election.
I am an INEC staff. I cannot in good conscience be part of any manipulation. These are the hard facts and can easily be verified. The source of the data are INEC servers. The server name, IP address and mac addresses of the various servers have been attached as proof of authenticity. These are results and accreditations streamed to the INEC servers from the card readers at the polling stations. A forensic analysis of the INEC servers will confirm same. The Presidential election results captured on INEC servers shows President Buhari scored 16,741,430 votes, Atiku Abubakar scored 18,356,732 votes and other candidates combined scored 1,332,522. The total accredited voters for the election as reported by the card reader is 37,668,305.
This data does not include Rivers State. At the time of this snapshot, the servers didn't have any data for Rivers State.
Click on link below to view all the data.
May God help us.
Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

This [post](https://twitter.com/olushelaolufolabi) was widely shared on social media:
The questions raised led to false information being spread about the Supreme Court having decided to nullify the elections and calling for another vote in 20 days. The information was spread by the website Exclusive 103 in the following article and shared widely on social media. The website does not adhere to journalistic standards and appears to spread false information. The link was shared by a fan page for Atiku Abubakar, who was the leading opponent to Buhari in February’s Presidential Election, and received attention from users who were sharing the information.

The information was shared by several other sources however it was unconfirmed by an official source. In fact, Agence France Presse (AFP) did a fact check on the story which identified it as false.

Other pages, such as Post-Nigeria, spread further stories saying that Northern leaders exposed Buhari’s victory as the biggest fraud, calling the 2019 Elections the worst in Nigeria so far. The story also questions the results of the Governorship Elections in the north. The page does not seem to commit to high journalistic standards, and users seem to consider the page as partisan and biased.

Another story, alleging that APC governors paid INEC Chairman NGN 1 billion each to rig the election for @MBuhari, went viral on social media. It was shared here by news portal Exclusive103, which has been found to share lots of false information. The post included a photograph of Governor Rochas Okorocha, who is an APC member and the incumbent governor of Imo State, who lost in the 23 February State National Assembly Election.

This print screen (right), which was shared on Facebook, suggests that disinformation was spread via WhatsApp in the elections, bringing into question the role of WhatsApp during election periods. Nigerians are heavy users of WhatsApp and it is an effective way to spread disinformation due to the private nature of messages and the ability for information to go viral. Given that WhatsApp is encrypted, it is difficult to determine the extent of the role it played in influencing voters over the previous weeks.

A video also went viral, with over 2.5k shares, of a talk by Senator Dino Melaye, about a motion moved by Dino concerning the malpractices in 2019 governorships and presidential elections.

Another video, which was posted by Sahara reporters, began trending on Twitter with the hashtag #OurMumuDonDoabt. The video involved a popular Nigerian musician named Charles Oputa AKA ‘Charly Boy’, who acknowledged that he received a financial bribe from Festus Keyamo, who is a senior advocate of Nigeria and Buhari’s campaign spokesperson, to slander the PDP presidential Candidate, Atiku Abubakar. Lawyer and public figure Reno Omokri also took to Twitter to share his opinion on the video.
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 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.