

IMS, IPC, NAWOJ, Seek Professional Coverage of Ondo Gov Election by the Broadcast Media



L-R: Mrs Doris Olumoko, Ondo State Chairperson, NAWOJ; Mr Sanmi Falobi of IPC, Dr Akin Akingbulu of IMS and the programme anchor

The Institute for Media and Society, IMS, the International Press Centre, IPC and the National Association of Women Journalists, NAWOJ have called on the broadcast media in Ondo State to be professional in the coverage of the upcoming poll in the state.

The trio made the appeal during a live appearance at the current affairs programme, *Dynamic Diet*, on NTA, Akure ahead of the Ondo State governorship elections scheduled for Saturday, October 10, 2020.

The programme was part of voter education by IMS and IPC to sensitize the media and the voting public ahead of the election.

Dr Akin Akingbulu, the Executive Director of IMS, in his remarks, disclosed that the Support to Media Component of the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria, EU-SDGN, was being implemented by IMS and IPC.

He said his organisation discovered some critical gaps in media professional after a research conducted by a team led by Professor Ayobami Ojebode, which are published in a book: *Media Readiness*

and Engagement of Electoral Issues towards the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria. The findings by the team led to the collaboration between IMS and IPC in conducting some activities designed to strengthen the media for fair, accurate and ethical coverage of the electoral process in Nigeria.

He said IMS works with the broadcast media and hinted that there are other implementing partners in the EU-SDGN project dealing with such activities as: Support to the National Assembly, NASS, INEC, Political Parties, Security Agencies, Women, Youths and People with Disabilities, PWDs., etc.

“Part of our work is also to strengthen the regulator, which is NBC, ensure women, youths and PWDs participation in the electoral process”, he pointed out.

Mr Sanmi Falobi, who represented the Director of IPC Lanre Arogundade, stated that the organization had been working with the print and online media to enhance their professionalism in the

area of election coverage, adding that in the process, the journalist is trained to hold the government accountable and sustain democratic governance.

NAWOJ chairperson in Ondo State, Doris Olumoko, on her part, said women journalists have been sensitizing women on their involvement in the electoral process both as contestants and as voters.

“We not just want women to vote, we want adequate women representation in politics. The participation of women in the elections has been very... very poor. Here in Ondo State, we have just one female legislator in the House of Assembly, which is very poor”, she stated.

Meanwhile, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has hailed the broadcast media in Nigeria for the professional and ethical broadcast, which no doubt, contributed to ensuring free, fair, and peaceful elections in Edo State.

NBC's Deputy Director, Public Affairs, Ekanem Antia, in a statement, “enjoined broadcasting stations in Ondo State to borrow a leaf from their colleagues in Edo State, by using the Nigeria Broadcasting Code as a guide to ensure ethical coverage of the election.”

The statement said as part of its mandate, NBC “monitored for compliance, the conduct and content of broadcasting stations before, during and after the just-concluded Edo State Elections in line with the NBC ACT, CAP11, Laws of the Federation 2004.”

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Imo NUJ Stands Down Warring Factions

Members of Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, Imo state council early on Thursday to nominated Mr Steve Uzoechi, state Correspondent of New Telegraph Newspaper and chairman, Imo state correspondent chapel as Caretaker committee chairman of the state council, thus bringing to an end a protracted crisis which had split the council down the middle for several months.

Uzoechi was appointed alongside Comr Precious Nwadike, Publisher of Nigeria WatchDog, Sir Sunny Ndukwu, Publisher of Eastern Front newspaper, Austin Okoro, Correspondent of Eastern Lead Express, Chibuike Chukwu of NTA, George Onyejiuwa of The Sun newspaper and Nwachukwu Tonia, Local Govt Information Federated Chapel

The 7-man committee was appointed at the union's congress held on Thursday, 8th, October at the Press center along Portharcourt road, Owerri.

Rising from the congress, members empowered the 7-man Caretaker committee backed with a Communique to preside over activities of the union pending the determination of the suit at the Industrial Court of Nigeria, sitting in Owerri.

The committee will serve for three months and as well ensure safety of union's properties and ensure a working cordial relationship with the present administration amongst others. All warring groups such as Chief Chris

Akaraonye, Elder Lambert Ojukwu and Sir Amby Uneze factions were directed by the congress to step aside while urging them to cue behind the current leadership.

Responding shortly after his inauguration, the Caretaker committee chairman, Steve Uzoechi thanked members for finding him worthy as he promised to put in his best to sanitize the union.

The congress was peaceful as security personnel from the Nigeria Police Force were on ground to witness the union's congress.

Ondo 2020: IPC Tasks Journalists, Security Agencies on Safety

The International Press Centre (IPC), Lagos- Nigeria has enjoined journalists and other media professionals that would be on electoral duty in Ondo State on Saturday, October 10, 2020 to pay deserved attention to their safety.

IPC also urged security operatives and other stakeholders that would be involved in the Ondo state Governorship election to help ensure the safety of journalists.

IPC Executive Director, Mr. Lanre Arogundade said the call was necessary because of the emerging

conflicts and tension by political actors and other players in the electoral process in the state, the recent signing of a peace accord notwithstanding.

“It is very important for journalists covering the Ondo state election to be safety conscious in the discharge of their duties, and to avoid situations that will put them in danger. Journalists are expected to take into consideration some safety measures while on the field he said, adding that they should internalize the following tips:

- Be non-partisan
- Don't walk or move alone
- Be INEC accredited and have your organizational identity card
- Be brave and smart...i.e. cover violent situations from a reasonable distance
- Handle classified information appropriately

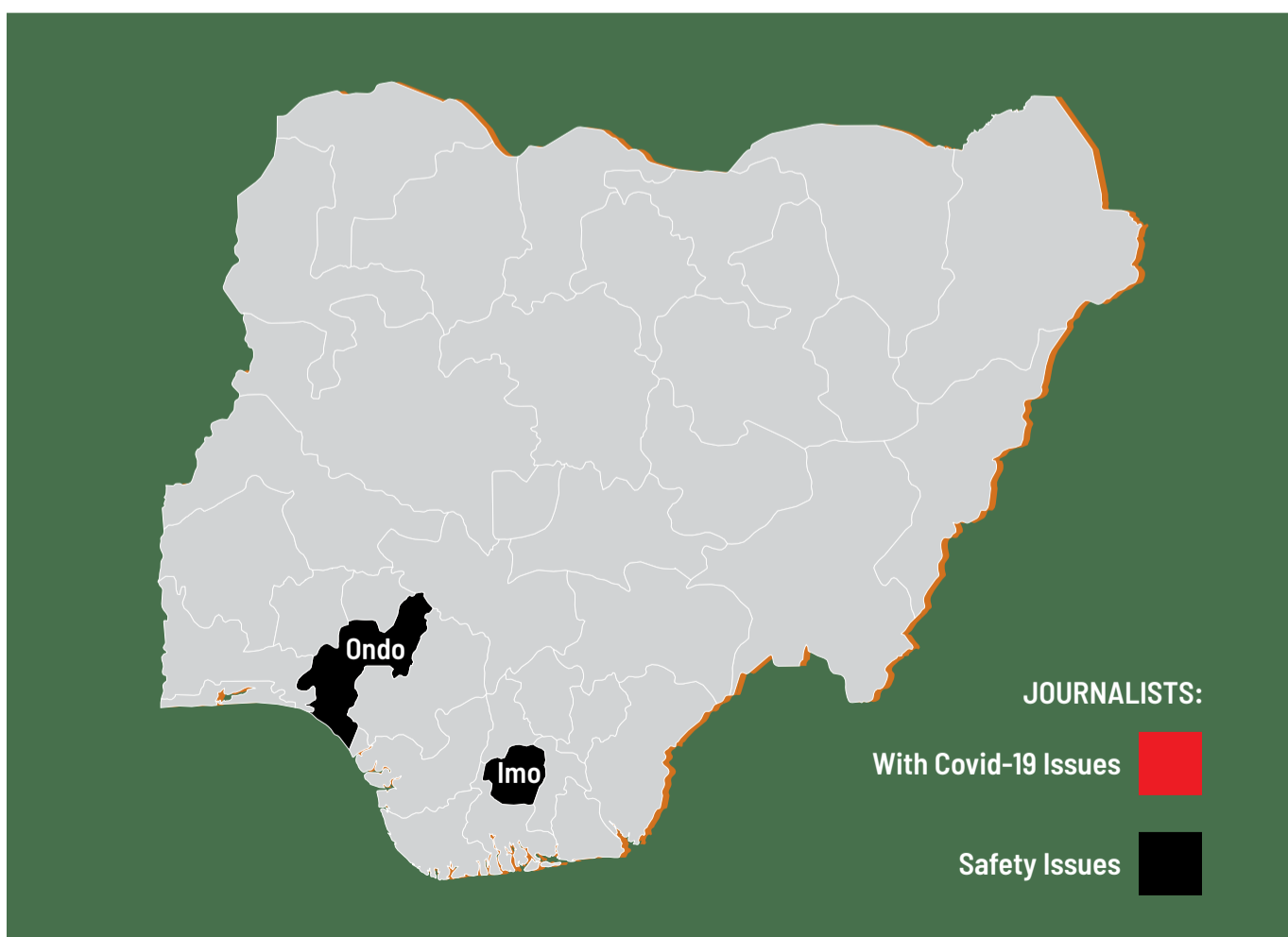
He also admonished other stakeholders, especially the security agencies to undertake their tasks in a very professional manner. He urged the Inspector General of Police, Muhammed Adamu to advice officers and men on the field, to protect accredited journalists, because the media is a critical part of the electoral process and journalists should be accorded due rights and privileges to enable them carry out their social obligations as partners in enshrining the credibility of the electoral process.

He said; “Other stakeholders, including elections observers should also proactively provide journalists covering the elections with information to ensure that all work together for the success of the elections”, Arogundade added.

As part of initiatives to keep tab on the safety consciousness of journalists, IPC said that there are safety alert officers who journalists under threat/attack can report to. Arogundade said that in cases of attacks or insecurity issues, concerned journalists on the field can contact any of the following persons:

- Melody Lawal** (Safety Alert Officer, IPC) - 08132776441;
- Moses Ojo** (South West, Press Freedom Monitor) – 08039105566

Mr. Arogundade also enjoined journalists to report any threats to the Ondo state Chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists.



NCC: Telecoms industry Invested N471.bn, Got N358b Direct Foreign Investments in 2019

The capital investment of mobile network operators and other telecom service providers in 2019 stood at a whopping N471.91bn, growing by seven per cent while N358.26 billion capital inflow, popularly known as Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), came in to the sector in 2019, according to the latest report by the Nigerian Communications Commission, NCC

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), which disclosed this in the 2019 Subscriber/Network Data, based on Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) confirmation, stated that the statistics from the five GSM operators and 16 other service providers, revealed that the total operating cost of Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and other service providers declined from N1.759 trillion in 2018 to N1.756 trillion in 2019, representing about 0.2 per cent drop.

The Five Majors

The five major GSM operators are MTN, Airtel, Globacom, and 9Mobile, which had an operating cost of N1.461 trillion in 2018 but fell to N1.392 trillion in the year under review. The Fixed operators recorded N3.1 to N3.7 billion during the period.

The Internet Service Providers (ISPs), which had N36.8 billion in 2018, posted N41.1 billion a year after.

In terms of revenue, NCC revealed that the combined income of N2.25 trillion for all players in 2018 rose to N2.468 trillion last year.

The GSM operators generated N1.962 trillion, Fixed, N4.3 billion, ISPs, N53.7 billion, while the rest got N449 billion.

Aside from the MTN, Airtel, Globacom, and 9Mobile, other operators in the report include SMILE, Visafone, and Ntel.

SMS Messages and Calls

A further breakdown shows that operators processed 1.96 billion international calls during the period, where outgoing calls were 257.8 million, and incoming hitting 1.7 billion.

Of the figures, MTN accounted for 1.2 billion. Airtel came second with 381.4 million. Globacom is third with 271.3 million. Emerging Market Telecommunications Service (EMTS), which plays as 9Mobile, processed 153.9 million. SMILE and Ntel recorded 451, 557, and 874,106 international calls.

Again, MTN had the highest investment among the MNOs, reporting an investment of N197.59bn in 2019 compared with 2018, when it invested N201.02bn in its network.

Airtel followed having spent N74.36bn on improving its network in 2019 as against N80.71bn in 2018. Next is Globacom, which spent N34.23bn on its network in 2019 as against N31.92bn the company invested in 2018.

Emerging Markets Telecommunications Service, (9mobile) invested N3.91bn to improve its network in 2019 compared with N2.31bn spent in 2018.

Also, Ntel invested N47m on its network in 2019 as against N137m in 2018.

Base Stations

According to the NCC in the document, other operators such as tower companies, value added service providers, colocation infrastructure companies and interconnect exchanges, among others, invested a total of N161.77bn in 2019. It said in the report that a total of 58,755 base transceiver stations and co-location towers were recorded.

It said; "As at December 2019, MTN owned the highest number of base stations standing at 16,796 base stations. By December 2019, Airtel had deployed 8,924 BTS; Glo had a total of 7,516 base stations; Ntel owned 675 BTS; 9mobile had 120 BTS while Smile owned two base stations

On roaming minutes in 2019, NCC put the total number of outgoing and incoming for the mobile operators at 9,449,021 and 60,583,648 minutes. MTN posted the highest incoming and



outgoing timing of 41,587,485 and 80,721,676.

Other operators, Globacom had 8,382,761 and 1,947,583; Airtel, 8,017,836 and 2,344,703 and 9Mobile achieved 2,595,566 and 4,435,058 minutes.

The report further showed that 30.8 billion short message service (texts) were exchanged in 2019 within Nigeria, where 6.35 billion were sent and 24.11 billion received.

Subscriber Base

Subscribers used Globacom network to receive 18.4 billion text messages, while 1.2 billion were sent out through the platform. MTN got 3.97 billion and sent out 3.6 billion; Airtel processed 1.12 billion messages and received 1.59 billion.

Users of 9Mobile network, on the other hand, sent 385 million SMS and acknowledged receipt of 403 million.

Meanwhile, international exchanges as at December 2019 were 56,205,299 while total number of SMS received was 183,518,472. In this regard, users deployed MTN network to initiate 31,763,227 messages and receive 8,014,285; Globacom sent 6,527,919 and got 3,285,046; Airtel executed 15,349,064 and received 135,442,243; 9Mobile sent 2,386,805, and got 36,536,376. SMILE network's tally was 23,800 and 85,968, while Ntel mailed 154,484 and took delivery of 154,554.

The total volume of data consumed by subscribers for the period increased from 68,154.12 TB in December 2018 to 125,149.86 TB in the corresponding year, indicating an 83.62 per cent year-on-year increase.

The development was linked to the enhanced broadband penetration in the country during the time, which was put at 37.80 per cent besides other regulatory support for operators to implement their various initiatives.

How the 36 States Fared

The report also showed that the top five states with highest number of base stations in the country were Lagos, 5,375; Ogun, 2,122; Rivers, 1,989; FCT, 1,826 and Oyo, 1,446.

States with the least number of base stations are Yobe, 244; Zamfara, 248; Gombe, 305; Jigawa, 316; Ebonyi, 328 and Kebbi, 330, were the states with the least base stations.

Experts Decry New Digital Taxes

The imposition of three new digital taxes by the federal government has not gone down well with stakeholders in the telecoms industry.

They have, therefore, warned that the imposition of the new digital taxes on the operations and services of technology and telecommunications companies would have negative effect on Nigerians' access to the Internet.

At a recent discussion with the theme: 'Impact of Communication Service Tax on Affordable Internet,' critical stakeholders frowned at the cost of taxes in addition to 39 existing taxes that telecoms companies were being made to pay which is transferred to customers.

They noted that the new regime of taxation would put data services out of reach for most Nigerians.

The Nigerian Coordinator, Alliance for Affordable Internet, Olusola Teniola, who disclosed the new taxes as nine per cent Communications Service Tax, 0.005 per cent cybersecurity levy and digital taxes for foreign companies with Significant Economic Presence in Nigeria, lamented that the new taxes would discourage more Nigerians from coming online, make connectivity more expensive, and deter foreign investors.

He further declared that even though the Senate was yet to discuss the planned CST, stakeholders needed to devise strategies to ensure that these taxes, especially CST, were not introduced.

"There has been a cyber security levy that has recently been drawn to our attention. We received communication that they want to really effect the 0.005% levy to every electronic transaction. So, this also applies to telecom operators, Internet Service Providers, Nigerian Stock Exchange, insurance companies," Teniola added.

He said the cyber security levy would be imposed on companies that facilitate and conduct online transactions.

In his reaction, the Head of Operations, Association of Licensed Telecommunication Operators of Nigeria, Gbolahan Awonuga, reportedly stated the notion the telecom company were generating a lot of revenue had turned

the telcos a cash cow for the government. Unfortunately, he said the cost of new taxes would be transferred to subscribers, adding that it would affect the price of data and call tariff.

According to him, the new taxes will cause a drawback to some government initiatives aimed to improve ease of doing business as well as financial inclusion target.

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Nigerian Government Moves to Review Cyber Security Policy

The Federal Government has inaugurated a multi-stakeholder committee to review the National Cybersecurity Policy and Strategy (NCPS) 2014, citing associated threats dynamics within the cyberspace.



Mohammed Babagana Monguno
National Security Adviser to President
Muhammadu Buhari

National Security Adviser (NSA), retired Major General Babagana Monguno, expressed the need to strengthen Nigeria's cyber security architecture. He said the entire cyber ecosystem needed periodic reforms for efficiency.

According to a statement issued from his office, the NSA noted that the evaluation was part of efforts to reposition the country to fully exploit the benefits of the Internet for enhanced security and economy. Nigeria's upper legislative chamber, the Senate, has pointed out that the country's yearly loss to cybercrime was N250 billion.

The NSA acknowledged that recent digital advancements have thrown up new businesses, ideas, responsibilities and social interactions.

For him, there was need for Nigeria, the Giant of Africa to redefine its national objectives and address some pressing developmental challenges together with the emergence of new forms of criminality and terrorism perpetrated through the cyberspace.

He was quoted as saying: "This committee was constituted to identify the current gaps in the National Cyber security Strategy and Policy 2014, articulate the various inputs of stakeholders and develop necessary frameworks to effectively mitigate evolving cyber threats and enhance Nigeria's productive engagements in the cyberspace."

“There was need for Nigeria, the Giant of Africa to redefine its national objectives and address some pressing developmental challenges together with the emergence of new forms of criminality and terrorism perpetrated through the cyberspace.”

Editor's Note

It is a testament to the resilient and lucrative nature of the telecommunications industry that while the economy continues to falter under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the telecos continue to attract substantial foreign direct investment into the country. In an easy to read and digest story arising from a 2019 documentary report by the Nigeria Communications Commission, you will find out how up and doing the sector is. It is our major story on business this week.

Plus another cheering story on the media front whereby financial support is coming to dedicated organisations which have devoted time and money to capacity building of the media and journalists in the country amid the Corona Virus pandemic. The details are spelt out inside for your delight.

Also warming is the story that the warring factions in the Imo state Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, have agreed to reconcile and allow peace to reign as a new executive council has been elected.

Well, this is bad apple in the bunch of good stories. The government is bent on imposing a Communication Service Tax on the telecommunication industry and the experts in the sector are beginning to make their voices heard in opposition to the move, describing it as an addition too many to the exiting 39 other forms of taxes that the sector is coping with. The customer, may be in for another cost bearing burden, which may affect business, the stakeholders warn

Ahead of the weekend Ondo governorship poll in Ondo state, the Institute for Media and Society, IMS and a EU-SDGN, project partner, the International Press Center, IPC collaborated with the National Association of Women Journalists, the Ondo state chapter, on an enlightenment and sensitization programme for citizens, journalists and stakeholders of the state and urged them to work together for the conduct of a free, fair and credible election in the state.

All these and many more are in this week edition. Enjoy!

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NCDC Confirmed COVID-19 Cases by State, October 9, 2020

States Affected	No. of Cases (Lab Confirmed)	No. of Cases (on admission)	No. Discharged	No. of Deaths
Lagos	19,886	4,432	15,250	204
FCT	5,790	488	5,223	79
Plateau	3,504	540	2,931	33
Oyo	3,293	700	2,553	40
Rivers	2,659	129	2,471	59
Edo	2,635	25	2,503	107
Kaduna	2,484	63	2,381	40
Ogun	1,927	164	1,735	28
Delta	1,803	17	1,737	49
Kano	1,740	11	1,675	54
Ondo	1,638	57	1,545	36
Enugu	1,289	102	1,166	21
Kwara	1,050	43	982	25
Ebonyi	1,042	4	1,008	30
Abia	898	18	872	8
Katsina	894	2	868	24
Osun	884	54	813	17
Gombe	883	111	747	25
Borno	745	4	705	36
Bauchi	707	6	687	14
Imo	579	16	551	12
Benue	482	59	413	10
Nasarawa	469	131	325	13
Bayelsa	401	4	376	21
Jigawa	325	6	308	11
Ekiti	323	5	312	6
Akwa Ibom	295	9	278	8
Niger	261	7	242	12
Anambra	250	12	219	19
Adamawa	248	23	208	17
Sokoto	162	0	145	17
Taraba	106	11	89	6
Kebbi	93	1	84	8
Cross River	87	4	74	9
Zamfara	79	1	73	5
Yobe	76	6	62	8
Kogi	5	0	3	2

Highlights

- On the 1st of October 2020, 151 new confirmed cases were recorded in Nigeria.
- Till date, 59,992 cases have been confirmed, 51,614 cases have been discharged and 1,113 deaths have been recorded in 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory.
- The 151 new cases are reported from 14 states - Lagos (71), Ogun (26), Kaduna (17), Osun (10), Oyo (8), FCT (6), Rivers (6), Plateau (5), Akwa Ibom (1), Ekiti (1)
- A multi-sectoral national emergency operations centre (EOC), activated at Level 3, continues to coordinate the national response activities