

# **DAILY**

# **BULLETIN**

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## **PRELIMINARY REGISTER OF VOTERS IN NIGERIA IS NOW 93,522,272 – INEC CHAIRMAN**

**The Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, has disclosed that as at today, Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2022, the total number of registered voters in the country stands at 93,522,272. He noted that the figure is at its preliminary state, pending the conclusion of the claims and objections exercise scheduled for next month.**

Prof. Yakubu made the disclosure during the Commission's fourth quarterly consultative meeting with leaders of political parties held at the INEC Headquarters in Abuja.

The INEC Chairman said that at the end of the Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercises, which started on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and lasted for thirteen consecutive months until its suspension on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, 12,298,944 Nigerians successfully completed the registration as new voters.

He said, "After a rigorous cleaning-up of the data using the Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS), a total of 2,780,756 (22.6%) were identified as ineligible registrants and invalidated from the record, among them double/multiple registrants, underaged persons, and outrightly fake registrations that fail to meet our business rules. Consequently, the number of valid registrations (post-ABIS) is 9,518,188."

"The 9,518,188 new voters have been added to the existing register of 84,004,084 voters. The preliminary voter register of voters in Nigeria now stands at 93,522,272. It is preliminary because Section 19(1) and (2) of the Electoral Act 2022 requires the Commission to display the hard copies of the register of voters for each Registration Area (Ward) and Local Government Area (and simultaneously publish the entire register on the

Commission's website) for a period of two weeks for scrutiny, claims, and objections by citizens not later than 90 days before a General Election".

Giving a breakdown of the demographic distribution of the new registered voters, Prof. Yakubu said, "7.2 million new voters, or 76.5%, are young people between 18 and 34 years of age, while there is a slightly higher number of female (4.8 million, or 50.82%) than male (4.6 million, or 49.18%) voters. In terms of occupation, 3.8 million (40.8%) are students.

Prof. Yakubu also disclosed that some staff who were found wanting in the cause of the CVR exercises are already facing disciplinary action. According to him, "The Commission deployed thousands of diligent staff for the CVR exercise and the vast majority of them discharged their duties conscientiously.

However, he said, "Unfortunately, a few of them did not. The fictitious registrations were carried out by some of our registration officers involved in the field exercise and could easily be traced.

He continued: "Each registration machine is operated using an access code tied to a dedicated e-mail assigned to a staff member." There is therefore an audit trail that gives the total number of people registered by each official involved in the registration exercise. In some cases, some of them made as many as 40 attempts or more to register one fake voter".

"As a result, the Commission has so far identified 23 Registration Officers involved in this unethical conduct and disciplinary action has commenced. We shall continue to protect the integrity of our voters' register. It is pivotal to credible elections. It is also a national asset and easily the largest database of citizens in Africa and one of the largest in the world".

On claims and Objections, Prof. Yakubu said "in the next few days, the Commission will print 9,352,228 pages of the register. The hard copy will be displayed for each of the 8,809 Registration Areas (Wards) and 774 Local Government Areas nationwide while the entire register will be published on our website for claims and objections as required by law".

He added that, "The display of the physical register will take place at the designated centers from Saturday 12th – Friday 25th November 2022. Further details, including the procedure for filing claims and objections, will be released by the Commission next week, and called on all citizens to take the opportunity to scrutinize the list and help the Commission further clean up the register of voters to be used for 2023 General Election.

On PVC printing and collection, the INEC Chairman assured that "the Commission is also working hard to ensure the completion of printing of remaining PVCs for new voters as well as those that applied to transfer or the replacement of their lost or damaged cards. In the coming days, we will also inform Nigerians of the detailed plan to ensure a seamless collection of the PVCs".

"We are aware that Nigerians expect an improvement in the procedure for PVC collection. Since the end of the CVR in July this year, we have been working to ensure that citizens have a pleasant experience when they come to collect their cards", he added.

The INEC Chairman also used the opportunity to remind the leaders of political parties of the Commission's resolve to deploy technology for the 2023 General Election. He said, "Let me once again reassure Nigerians that there is no going back on the deployment of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) for voter accreditation".

"There is no going back on the transmission of results to the INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV) in real-time on Election Day. There will be no incident form that enables ineligible persons to vote using other people's Permanent Voters' Cards (PVCs) during elections. "We are committed to ensuring that the 2023 General Election is transparent and credible, reflecting the will of the Nigerian people".

He reiterated the need for political parties to eschew violence in the course of their campaigns, stressing that it was in contravention of the Electoral Act.

Prof. Yakubu said that "Last week, the Commission cautioned political parties, candidates, and their supporters to eschew violence during the electioneering campaign. The statement was necessary against the background of clashes among supporters of different political parties, including allegations of denial of access to public facilities and the destruction of billboards and other outdoor campaign materials by acts of thuggery. The campaigns have just begun. "

As party leaders, you should remain committed to peaceful electioneering. We will continue to work together to remove encumbrances to the right of parties and candidates to freely canvass for the support of the electorate. The Commission will continue to track the campaigns and will not hesitate to initiate the prosecution of violators as provided by law".

Responding, the Chairman of the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC), Engr. Yabagi Yusuf Sani, passed a vote of confidence in the Commission and its leadership. He said, "I want to use this occasion to also reaffirm the confidence of IPAC in the leadership of INEC for its consistent demonstration of diligence, uncommon zeal and patriotism in the pursuit of the agency's statutory mandate."

According to him, "On the basis of our evaluation that INEC has been well on track, the leadership of IPAC wishes to use this occasion to condemn the emerging antics and smear campaign by certain shadowy and cowardly figures who have clearly embarked on the treacherous and unpatriotic conspiracy of reversing the outstanding landmarks that INEC has recorded in recent years in the annals of the nation's electoral history."

In the current situation, Engr. Sani assured the Commission that it can count on IPAC's usual support as well as the goodwill and support of the majority of the country's citizens. "We urge you to remain steadfast and strong in the consciousness that you have your hard-earned reputation to protect; that the eyes of the entire nation and, indeed, the wider global community are keenly focused on you," he added.

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