



**TEXT OF PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN  
OF THE NEW NIGERIA PEOPLES PARTY, NNPP, PROF RUFAI  
AHMED ALKALI ON THE CONDUCT OF THE 25<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY  
2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS**

HELD ON TUESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2023 AT THE  
CONFERENCE HALL OF TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL, ABUJA

Gentlemen of the Press,

On behalf of our Party, the New Nigeria People's Party NNPP and all our candidates, we wish to express our gratitude to all Nigerians especially our teaming supporters who thronged their polling units on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023 to exercise their civic duty and vote for our Party but unfortunately met an election arrangement that is diametrically opposite to everything that INEC has promised. We are deeply concerned that going by what had happened on election day, the election umpire has taken our country back to pre-2015 era of election where everything goes: where voters were deliberately and systematically disenfranchised; where ballot box snatching and ballot box stuffing was the norm; where voter suppression was widespread; where violence and vote-buying were the main deciding factors of the outcome of elections; where security agents openly take side with the ruling party and participate actively in rigging elections; and where people who

have not participated in an election are declared winners of the election [for instance, in Kano Ibrahim Shekarau who formally resigned from the NNPP, withdrew from the race, registered with the PDP, conveyed same to the party and to the INEC is now declared by INEC as the winner of an election under the NNPP]. This is the era that the Nigerians election umpire, INEC, has, unfortunately returned our country to.

At the NNPP, we wish to draw attention to seven fundamental observations that we believed were deliberately planned between INEC and the ruling party to compromise the election in favour of the ruling party:

1. **Deliberate Undermining of the NNPP by INEC.** From the beginning of the 2023 electioneering process, INEC as a Commission has been displaying incomprehensible hostility towards the NNPP. From the conduct of our congresses and conventions to the conduct of our primary elections we suffered unnecessary and unexplainable resistance and outright sabotage from INEC both at state and national levels. The most disturbing one was when INEC shut our party from submitting our candidates onto their server days before the deadline. We had to go to court and secure judgement to compel INEC to accept our Candidates. As if that was not enough, even after the court judgement, INEC went ahead to appeal some of the judgments. And to the best of our knowledge, we are the only political party that INEC has been appealing pre-election cases that we have won in courts.

The most shameful of all is the refusal of INEC to use the correct and legible logo of our party on the ballot papers. The deliberate use of illegible logo of our party on the ballot papers of the 2023 general elections by INEC is very unfortunate. We were shocked on the Election Day to discover that INEC has decided to make use of the most blurred image to represent the logo of NNPP. It is even more shocking that the blurred image that INEC has put on the ballot did not include the name of our party. This is in spite of the provision of section 42 (1) which states “...the commission shall prescribe the format of the ballot papers which shall include the **symbol adopted by the political party of the candidate and such other information as it may require**”.

Majority of our supporters found it difficult to identify NNPP on the ballot paper. The key representation of the NNPP logo is the **basket of fruits**. But on the INEC ballot papers neither the basket nor the fruits can be identified. This did not only confuse our supporters but deliberately disenfranchised them.

2. **Campaign on Election Day.** While it is illegal to campaign on election day according to the provisions of the electoral act, the President of Nigeria Maj. Gen. M. Buhari (rtd.) and the Minister of Justice Barr A Malami and many senior members of the government were seen on election day campaigning openly by displaying their

ballot papers showing Nigerians which party should be voted. The action of the President and commander-in-chief together with that of the Minister of Justice, which clearly was campaigning on Election Day, has compromised the election by showing Nigerians that this is the party that the Nigerian government wants Nigerians to vote for. And for the President to display his ballot papers after voting just few minutes after the opening of the polls amounts to multiple offences: first, the electoral act requires that balloting be done in secret but the President disregarded that; second, campaign on election day is illegal but the president did not only displayed his ballot but also announced that he wants all Nigerians to vote for his candidate. And for this illegal action to be made by the president, and on Election Day, speaks volume about the entire election arrangement.

- 3. Voter Suppression.** It is unfortunate that the distribution of election materials was deliberately delayed in many polling units to suppress our voters. This is Rigging-by-Time. In many places elections started few minutes to the closing time of 2:30pm. Law enforcement personnel especially some Police and DSS were openly seen colluding with the agents of the ruling party and elections officials not only to cause delays in the process but also to harass and intimidate voters in places where the ruling party is very unpopular.

4. **Vote Buying.** In spite of the Naira swap policy which the government claimed was intended to end the culture of vote-buying, there is no gainsaying that the 2023 general election was among the worse in terms of vote-buying. While the volume of cash being used to bribe voters has reduced, the quantum of other truckloads of essential commodities that was used openly, at polling units, to bribe voters was unprecedented in the history of elections in Nigeria. In almost every electoral ward in the country, merchants of corruption and bribe were in their elements! Truckloads of raw food items, truckloads of fabrics, truckloads of toiletries etc. were seen everywhere and being used shamelessly by the ruling party to bribe voters and compromise the election. In many places this dastardly act was being protected by some law enforcement agents.

5. **BVAS Failure and Over-voting.** The embarrassing decision of INEC to close down the iReV server might not be unconnected with the very widespread failures of the bvas across the country. In majority of the PUs across rural Nigeria, the bvas machine failed. It simply did not work. There was no any accreditation. And people were allowed to vote. Nothing compromised the election and returned us to pre-technology era than the shelving of bvas and allowing election to hold without accreditation. And in those places, ballot boxes were simply stuffed with ballot papers of a particular party to the detriment and disadvantage of other parties. No over-voting is worse

that voting without accreditation at all. In fact in the few places where the bvas machine worked, the attempt to change the results on transit has also rubbished the accreditation as the record on the bvas is entirely different with the tampered results on the results sheet.

**6. INEC Lies about iReV Server.** In the entire arrangements for the 2023 general elections, nothing was more comforting to all political parties on the opposition side than the fact that election results will be transmitted electronically, in real-time, from the polling units to the iReV server. And INEC kept hammering, repeatedly, on the fact that there will be no going back on the arrangement to electronically transmit results from the PUs. But the ruling party and all its candidate kept kicking against the arrangement. To our greatest shock, and in kowtowing to the whims of the ruling party, INEC shelved the electronic transmission arrangement and literally closed the iReV server when only about 30 out of over 176,000 PUs results were uploaded. This very action of colluding with the ruling party and returning to manual transmission has completely compromised the 2023 general elections. Election results were intercepted and changed between PUs and Wards Collation centres, between Wards Collation centres and Local government collation centres, and between local government collation centres and state collation centres. This election is marred with numerous incidences of changing the results of the election on transit from one level to

another – exactly what the electronic transmission clause of the electoral act seeks to avoid.

**7. Election Marred by Unprecedented Violence.** Never in the history of Nigeria did we experience widespread violence in almost every local government council in the country on Election Day. People were maimed and killed. Party offices and public buildings were torched by arsonists and vandals. Election materials were destroyed in many Polling Units. A typical example is the cold-blood murder of 15 innocent members of the NNPP on Election Day allegedly by the current member representing Tudun Wada/Dogua federal constituency. Some were burnt alive, some were shot at close range while others were hacked with machetes and daggers. Violence on the scale we saw on February 25<sup>th</sup> couldn't have possibly allow for any semblance of fair election. In fact all the serious election observers have noted this. For instance, the NDI/IRI observer mission reports that:

The mission notes that despite the much-needed reforms to The Electoral Act [2022](#), the election fell well short of Nigerian citizens' reasonable expectations. Logistical challenges and **multiple incidents of political violence overshadowed the electoral process and impeded a substantial number of voters from participating.**

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we must be aware that, no matter the situation in our country all leaders must consider the stability and security of the country as paramount. Our country is bigger than any individual and is certainly more important than any vested interest.

To save our democracy and our country, the present election results must not be accepted by Nigerians and by all friends of Nigeria. We are therefore calling on the immediate suspension of the announcement of result and the cancellation of the 2023 presidential election across the country. New election should be conducted as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention.

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!

Long live NNPP

**Prof Rufai Ahmed Alkali**

National Chairman

New Nigeria Peoples Party, NNPP