

2027

The gathering storm In Nigeria's Political Theatre 'NDC the New Bride?'



A quiet unease is spreading across Nigeria's political landscape, and it is no longer difficult to trace its source. The 2027 general elections, though still some distance away, have already begun to cast a long and restless shadow. What should ordinarily be a season of strategic preparation has instead evolved into a climate of anxiety, suspicion, and calculated silence. Beneath the surface of public confidence lies a political class increasingly unsure of its footing, caught between ambition, betrayal, and an unpredictable electoral terrain. Nowhere is this tension more palpable than within Nigeria's National Assembly—the 469-seat institution that serves as the nerve center of federal lawmaking, representation, and oversight. For many of its occupants, 2027 is not just another election cycle; it is a looming



referendum on relevance, loyalty, and survival. The familiar rhythms of political continuity have been disrupted, replaced by a growing awareness that the rules of engagement are shifting in ways that are neither entirely clear nor entirely fair. At the heart of this uncertainty lies the question of control—who truly determines the path to political legitimacy? For years, state governors have steadily consolidated their influence, evolving from mere subnational executives into formidable political gatekeepers. Their role in shaping party structures, coordinating electoral processes, and ultimately deciding candidacies has become both entrenched and controversial. What was once a matter of political convenience has hardened into a system of near-absolute leverage. This concentration of power did not go unchallenged. Within the ruling All Progressives Congress, murmurs of dissent grew louder as plans emerged to adopt a consensus-based approach for candidate selection—an arrangement many perceived as a thinly veiled mechanism to sideline dissenting voices and reward loyalists. For a party that prides itself on internal democracy, the optics were troubling. The resistance, though subtle, was effective. It forced a recalibration, culminating in a return to direct primaries—a system widely regarded as more participatory, if not entirely immune to manipulation.

On paper, direct primaries offer a level playing field, a chance for aspirants to test their popularity before party

members. In reality, however, the governors' influence remains deeply woven into the fabric of the process. Political structures, financial resources, and institutional loyalty still tilt heavily in their favor. The shift in method, while significant, does not entirely dismantle the architecture of control. It merely reconfigures it. History offers sobering lessons in this regard. The late Ibrahim Mantu secured his party's ticket against considerable odds, only to falter at the decisive moment during the general elections. Similarly, Ghali Na'abba, once one of the most powerful figures in the legislature, found that party endorsement did not translate into electoral victory. These cases underscore a fundamental truth that many current lawmakers are being forced to confront: winning the ticket is merely the beginning; the real contest lies beyond the primaries, in the unpredictable arena of public mandate. This realization has deepened the sense of unease among incumbents. The pathway to re-nomination is fraught with political landmines, while the general election itself presents an entirely different set of variables—voter sentiment, opposition strategy, and the ever-present risk of internal sabotage. For many legislators, the ground beneath their political careers feel less stable than ever before. Compounding this instability are recent developments that highlight the cost of perceived disloyalty.

The experience of Ahmad Lawan serves as a cautionary tale. Once a central figure in the national political equation, his inability to secure a party ticket following the 2023 primaries—where he contested against Bola Ahmed Tinubu—has been widely interpreted as a consequence of strained political alliances. In a system where loyalty is both currency and insurance, even the most established figures are not immune to exclusion. In response to these uncertainties, a new layer of political maneuvering has emerged. The phenomenon of proxy participation—where aspirants quietly secure nomination forms through intermediaries—reflects a class hedging its bets, unwilling to fully commit until the contours of the battlefield become clearer. It is a strategy born of caution, but also of confusion, raising questions about its long-term efficacy in a system that increasingly rewards visibility and direct engagement. Yet, beyond the strategies and counter-strategies, the deeper narrative of 2027 is one of transition. Nigeria's political ecosystem is undergoing a subtle but significant evolution. The traditional hierarchies of influence are being tested, while new alignments are quietly taking shape. The dominance of governors, though still formidable, is facing a degree of scrutiny that could, over time, recalibrate the balance of power within parties. For the electorate, this moment presents both risk and opportunity. The heightened competition and internal party tensions could either weaken democratic outcomes or, paradoxically, strengthen them by forcing greater accountability and broader participation. Much will depend on how these

dynamics unfold—and whether the institutions meant to safeguard the process can rise above the pressures exerted by entrenched interests. As the countdown to 2027 continues, one thing is clear: the election will not merely be a contest of candidates, but a test of the very structures that produce them. It will challenge assumptions about power, expose the limits of political control, and ultimately redefine the relationship between ambition and legitimacy in Nigeria's democratic journey. For now, the atmosphere remains charged—thick with anticipation, uncertainty, and the quiet calculations of those who know that in Nigerian politics, survival is never guaranteed, and victory is rarely straightforward.

As Nigeria gradually builds momentum toward the 2027 general election, the judiciary once again occupies a central and delicate position in the nation's democratic process. In any democracy, the judiciary serves as the guardian of the constitution, the arbiter of disputes, and the last hope of the common man. In Nigeria's case, this role becomes even more critical during election cycles, when political tensions rise and legal contests intensify.

Increasingly, the courts have become the battleground for pre-election disputes. Political parties and aspirants are frequently approaching the judiciary to resolve issues ranging from party primaries and candidate eligibility to internal party leadership crises. While this trend reflects a growing reliance on legal mechanisms rather than violence or disorder, it also places enormous pressure on the judiciary to act swiftly, fairly, and without bias.

One of the most significant roles of the judiciary ahead of the 2027 elections is ensuring internal party democracy. Many disputes brought before the courts stem from flawed or manipulated primary elections. When the courts intervene to correct such irregularities, they reinforce democratic norms and compel political parties to adhere to their constitutions and electoral guidelines. However, conflicting judgments from courts of competent jurisdiction have at times created confusion and undermined public confidence in the justice system.

Another critical responsibility of the judiciary is the interpretation and enforcement of the Electoral Act. Recent reforms, including the increasing use of technology in elections, have introduced new legal questions that only the courts can clarify. As political actors continue to test the limits of these laws, the judiciary must provide clear guidance while preserving the spirit of electoral integrity. Timely and consistent rulings will be essential to prevent uncertainty capable of destabilizing the electoral process. Election petitions represent another area where the judiciary's role is indispensable. Post-election disputes do not only determine winners and losers; they also shape the credibility of the entire electoral system. The handling of such cases must reflect transparency, diligence, and strict adherence to the law. Delays in delivering judgments, or



perceptions of judicial compromise, can erode public trust and fuel political tension. As 2027 approaches, there is an urgent need to strengthen election tribunals, ensure adequate staffing, and provide continuous training for judicial officers. Judicial independence remains the cornerstone of credible electoral adjudication. For the judiciary to function effectively, it must be insulated from political interference and external pressures. Allegations of influence—whether from the executive, legislature, or powerful political actors—can severely damage the integrity of the institution. Equally important is the issue of judicial ethics and discipline. The National Judicial Council (NJC) has a crucial responsibility to uphold standards within the judiciary. Any misconduct or compromise must be addressed promptly and decisively. A judiciary perceived as corrupt or partisan cannot effectively serve as an impartial umpire in electoral disputes. Strengthening internal accountability mechanisms will therefore be vital to restoring and sustaining public confidence. Public perception is another factor that cannot be ignored. The legitimacy of judicial decisions often depends on how they are received by the public. Even when rulings are legally sound, poor communication or a lack of transparency can breed suspicion and mistrust. The judiciary must therefore strive to clearly explain the reasoning behind its decisions and promote public enlightenment that demystifies legal processes.

As Nigeria approaches the 2027 elections, the judiciary must reinforce democratic values, uphold the rule of law, and strengthen public trust in the electoral system. The success of the elections will not depend solely on the conduct of the electoral body or the behaviour of political actors. It will also depend on the ability of the judiciary to serve as a fair, independent, and impartial arbiter.

A judiciary that is efficient and credible will not only resolve disputes but also deter electoral malpractice and promote a culture of accountability. As the nation looks ahead to another defining electoral moment, the courts must remain steadfast in their duty to uphold justice, protect democracy, and ensure that the will of the people prevails.

Meanwhile the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Joash Amupitan, has raised concerns over growing insecurity across Nigeria, warning that it poses a serious threat to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections in the country. Amupitan spoke recently during a visit to the Inspector-General of Police, Tunji Disu, in Abuja, ahead of preparations for the 2027 general elections. The INEC chairman said persistent violence, electoral malpractice and security threats could undermine public confidence in the electoral process if urgent and proactive measures are not taken. "In Nigeria, our electoral system has placed numerous challenges over the years, ranging from malpractices to threats of violence, vote trading that undermine the confidence of

the electorates," Amupitan said. "These challenges not only affect the outcome of our elections, but also pose significant risks to our national security.

Thus, it is imperative that we address these concerns with utmost seriousness and resolve." He stressed the need for comprehensive security planning before the elections, noting that security agencies must identify potential flashpoints and deploy preventive strategies to safeguard voters and electoral officials. "The scale of insecurity across the various parts of Nigeria presents a threat to the conduct of the fair election," he said. "It is essential that we carry out total security risk analysis ahead of the election and this will enable us to identify potential flashpoints and deploy appropriate strategies to mitigate risks, thereby safeguarding voters, electoral officials and the integrity of the electoral process." Amupitan noted that the presidential election scheduled for January 16, 2027, as well as the governorship and state assembly elections fixed for February 6, 2027, would require strong collaboration between INEC and security agencies, particularly the Nigeria Police Force, which leads election security operations. He added that ongoing political activities, including party congresses and upcoming primaries under the Electoral Act 2026, had further heightened the need for adequate security arrangements. The INEC chairman also referenced the forthcoming off-cycle governorship elections in Ekiti and Osun states, alongside several pending by-elections nationwide, describing them as important tests for Nigeria's democratic process.



On the issue of humanitarian concerns, Amupitan emphasized the need to ensure that Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and persons with disabilities are not excluded from the electoral process. "I also want to draw attention to several IDP camps that are scattered all over Nigeria," he said. "Let me say that it is their right to also vote, and they must not be disenfranchised. "As the electoral body, we are doing everything to ensure that all those in IDP camps are given the conducive environment to exercise their franchise, and also the people with disabilities." He urged the police to give special attention to vulnerable groups during election planning and operations. Responding, the Inspector-General of Police assured INEC of the Force's readiness to tackle emerging security threats ahead of the elections. Disu said the police would deploy intelligence-led policing and preventive security measures to address issues such as political violence, arms proliferation, cyber manipulation and attacks on electoral infrastructure.

According to him, the police had already commenced nationwide threat assessments and intelligence mapping in collaboration with other security agencies to ensure adequate protection of electoral personnel, facilities and materials. "I assure you that the police will enforce electoral laws firmly and

professionally,” Disu said. “We will ensure that we enforce electoral laws firmly and we do it professionally.” The police chief warned that individuals involved in electoral offences, including vote-buying, ballot snatching, voter intimidation and destruction of electoral materials, would be arrested and prosecuted. “I want to emphasize that individuals involved in ballot snatching, vote buying, voter intimidation, destruction of electoral materials, violent disruption of polls or attack on electoral officials will be arrested and prosecuted in accordance with the laws,” he added. On the participation of displaced persons and persons with disabilities, Disu said the police had already factored them into its election security plans. “You mentioned the issue of people in the IDP camp. We have noted that they are in our plans,” he said. “People with disabilities have been taken into cognizance and special plans have been put in place for them.”

As the electoral atmosphere is gearing up the Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has issued a strong warning over what it describes as a deepening pattern of political interference, institutional compromise, and coordinated destabilization of opposition parties ahead of the 2027 general elections. The Rights Association alleged that recent developments in Nigeria's political space point to a deliberate strategy by powerful interests within the system to weaken opposition formations, fracture emerging alliances, and influence electoral outcomes before Nigerians even get to the ballot. HURIWA specifically raised concerns about alleged political engineering linked to actors within the Presidency led by Bola Ahmed Tinubu, warning that the use of state-linked influence to shape opposition dynamics represents a direct threat to constitutional democracy. It further alleged that the Office of the Chief of Staff, headed by Femi Gbajabiamila, is being mentioned in political circles as a strategic coordination point for managing internal party fractures within opposition ranks through influence, persuasion, and alleged inducement.

According to HURIWA, “what is unfolding is not normal political competition. It is a structured effort to destabilize opposition platforms from within, weaken credible alternatives, and tilt the political space in favour of predetermined outcomes.” The group warned that democracy cannot survive where opposition parties are persistently destabilized through internal sabotage, judicial manipulation, or external political pressure. It also expressed concern over what it described as growing attempts to exploit legal and institutional processes to frustrate emerging political formations such as the Nigeria Democratic Congress (NDC), noting that controversies surrounding party registration and recognition must be handled strictly within constitutional boundaries by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). HURIWA referenced the ongoing debate surrounding opposition realignments involving prominent political actors such as Peter Obi and Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, cautioning

that any attempt to frustrate their political participation—directly or indirectly—would amount to a dangerous erosion of democratic competition. The Association also warned against what it described as the “judicialisation of political manipulation,” where courts are allegedly drawn into partisan disputes in ways that could compromise public confidence in the judiciary. HURIWA stressed that the judiciary must remain the last line of democratic protection—not a tool for political engineering or partisan advantage. The group further called on INEC to maintain strict neutrality and resist any pressure, direct or indirect, that could compromise its constitutional mandate to guarantee free, fair, and credible elections. On the international front, HURIWA urged democratic partners including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and the European Union to closely monitor Nigeria's evolving political climate, warning that unchecked manipulation of democratic processes could have regional and global implications.

“The world must not look away while democratic space is quietly being narrowed,” the statement said. HURIWA also called on Nigerians across political, ethnic, and religious divides to remain vigilant and actively defend the integrity of the electoral process, stressing that democracy survives only when citizens refuse to normalize institutional abuse. The Association concluded with a stark warning: “When opposition is systematically





weakened and institutions are compromised, elections become rituals—not choices. Nigeria must not be pushed into that reality.” In every constitutional democracy, the legitimacy of the state rests not merely on the existence of laws, but on the public’s belief that those laws are applied fairly, consistently, and without political prejudice. Nigeria’s current political climate is increasingly testing that belief. A growing perception, particularly among politically aware segments of the population, is that the machinery of justice is being deployed unevenly, with harsher scrutiny directed at opposition figures while politically aligned actors appear to benefit from restraint, delay, or institutional caution. Whether fully substantiated or not, this perception is taking root, and its implications for the judiciary are profound. The trajectory of high-profile political scrutiny in recent years has drawn attention to figures such as Abubakar Malami, Nasir El-Rufai, Mele Kyari, Godwin Emezie, Sadiya Umar Farouq and Senator Aminu Tambuwal, individuals who, at different moments, have found themselves subject to investigation, legal pressure, or sustained public allegations following shifts in political alignment or exit from office. In principle, such scrutiny is consistent with democratic accountability. However, accountability loses its moral force when it appears selective.

The contrast often drawn in public discourse involves the treatment of politically connected figures within the

ruling establishment. Allegations and controversies associated with individuals such as former APC Chairman, Abdullahi Ganduje, the former head of NIRSAL, AbdulHamid Zango, Betta Edu, a former Minister and former Governor of Kogi State, Yahaya Bello have not always generated the same visible prosecutorial urgency or sustained legal momentum. While legal complexities, evidentiary thresholds, and procedural safeguards may explain differences in case progression, the absence of transparent communication around these disparities fuels suspicion. In politics, perception is not a peripheral concern—it is central to legitimacy.

At the institutional level, agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission are constitutionally and statutorily mandated to operate without fear or favor. Yet, there appears to be a public perception that their actions are interpreted within a broader political context. When investigations appear to cluster around opposition figures, particularly during politically sensitive periods such as electoral cycles or moments of intra-elite contestation, the line between lawful enforcement and political strategy becomes blurred in the public imagination. It is at this point that the judiciary, though structurally independent, becomes entangled in the consequences of executive and prosecutorial conduct. Under Section 6 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), judicial powers are vested in the courts, while Section 36 guarantees the right to fair hearing. These provisions establish the judiciary as the ultimate arbiter of justice and the final safeguard against abuse. However, the judiciary does not operate in a vacuum; it receives cases shaped by investigative priorities, prosecutorial discretion, and political timing.

When citizens observe a pattern in which opposition figures are rapidly arraigned, subjected to intensive legal processes, or publicly scrutinized, while cases involving ruling party actors appear slower, less aggressive, or inconclusive, the distinction between different arms of government collapses in public perception. The courts, by virtue of their visibility in the adjudicative process, become associated with outcomes they did not originate. Thus emerges a credibility paradox: regardless of the legal merits of individual cases, the judiciary risks being perceived as either complicit in selective justice or ineffective in resisting it. This perception is further complicated by the procedural realities of the Nigerian legal system. Adjournments, interlocutory appeals, evidentiary disputes, and jurisdictional challenges are inherent features of due process. Yet, when these procedural tools appear to benefit one category of political actors more than another, they are no longer viewed as neutral safeguards but as instruments of delay or protection. Consequently, what is legally routine becomes politically suspect. Under the administration of

Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the consolidation of political power has coincided with heightened sensitivity to issues of opposition space and institutional neutrality. Critics argue that a pattern is emerging in which investigative bodies, media narratives, and judicial processes appear aligned in ways that disadvantage opposition figures. Whether this alignment is deliberate or incidental is, in some respects, less important than its cumulative effect: a gradual erosion of trust in the impartiality of the justice system. The danger here is not abstract. Judicial legitimacy is the cornerstone of democratic dispute resolution. When political actors lose confidence in the courts, they are less likely to seek legal remedies and more likely to resort to alternative, potentially destabilizing methods of contestation. Similarly, when the public begins to believe that judicial outcomes are influenced by political considerations, compliance with court decisions weakens, and the moral authority of the law diminishes.

Nigeria's democratic history underscores the importance of judicial resilience. During periods of military rule and constitutional uncertainty, the judiciary often served as a critical, if imperfect, check on executive excess. That legacy has imbued the courts with symbolic significance as guardians of justice. However, symbolism alone cannot sustain legitimacy. It must be reinforced by consistent, transparent, and demonstrably impartial conduct across all politically sensitive cases. A more precise and defensible characterization of the current moment, therefore, is not that Nigeria is experiencing an excess of prosecution, but that it is grappling with the perception, and possibly the reality, of selective enforcement. This distinction is crucial. It acknowledges the necessity of holding public officials accountable while simultaneously questioning whether such accountability is being applied evenly. The long-term implications of this trajectory are significant. If the perception of selective justice hardens into public consensus, the judiciary will face a crisis of confidence that cannot be easily reversed. Restoring trust would then require not only institutional reform but also a sustained demonstration of independence across multiple high-profile cases, irrespective of political affiliation.

As the political storm is gathering for 2027 the issue confronting Nigeria is not simply one of political rivalry or legal contestation; it is a deeper question about the integrity of State institutions and the sustainability of democratic governance. The judiciary, though not the architect of prosecutorial decisions, stands at the center of this unfolding challenge. Its ability to maintain public confidence will depend not only on adherence to legal principles but also on its capacity to be seen, clearly and consistently, as an impartial arbiter in a highly polarized political environment. Without that confidence, the very foundation of Nigeria's constitutional order risks gradual but profound erosion.

Nigeria's opposition politics may have entered a new phase after former presidential candidates Peter Obi and

Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso formally joined the Nigeria Democratic Congress, NDC, triggering a wave of defections that is rapidly reshaping calculations ahead of the 2027 presidential election. Within days of their move from the crisis-hit African Democratic Congress, ADC, senators, House of Representatives members and political blocs aligned with the former coalition began gravitating toward the NDC, instantly giving the relatively new party national visibility, legislative presence and growing momentum. The speed of the realignment has unsettled both the ruling camp and rival opposition blocs, reopening debate over whether Nigeria's opposition can finally unite strongly enough to mount a serious challenge to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in 2027. Much of the growing attention is being driven by the changing political arithmetic and the fear, in some quarters, that the opposition may finally be finding a rallying point after months of fragmentation and failed coalition talks. In the 2023 presidential election, Obi secured about 6.1 million votes while Kwankwaso polled roughly 1.5 million. Combined, both candidates attracted more than 7.6 million votes against Tinubu's approximately 8.8 million. Although both men ran on separate platforms, they built some of the strongest grassroots movements seen in recent political cycles, particularly among young urban voters, first-time voters and northern populist blocs.

The significance of the emerging alliance lies not only in the combined vote strength of both men, but also in the possibility of merging their organizational structures, volunteer networks and legislative influence under one political platform. Unlike 2023, when Obi and Kwankwaso ran on separate platforms, the emerging alliance is now attracting sitting lawmakers. Several senators and House members have already moved toward the NDC following the Obi-Kwankwaso alliance, strengthening perceptions that the party could evolve from a fringe platform into a serious national force before 2027. Among those who defected was Senator Victor Umeh, who cited instability and litigation within the ADC as major reasons for his decision. Umeh said the prolonged leadership disputes and court cases within the ADC had made it increasingly difficult for serious political actors to remain focused on broader national issues. He argued that constant internal battles had become one of the biggest weaknesses of opposition politics in Nigeria and explained that his decision followed consultations with supporters and political associates. The movement of lawmakers into the NDC has also fueled speculation that more opposition figures may defect in the coming months, especially if the party continues to gain traction nationally. Some within the opposition believe the defections reflect growing concern among politicians about entering the 2027 election cycle without a stable platform capable of surviving both internal crises and external pressure.

As Nigeria edges closer to the 2027 general elections, fresh cracks are emerging within the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), with mounting concerns over how the party's consensus system is being deployed

to shape candidacies across key states. Investigations reveal that while the consensus model was originally designed to promote unity and reduce internal friction, it is increasingly being manipulated by powerful state actors, particularly governors, to sideline popular aspirants and consolidate political control. The consensus arrangement, which requires the voluntary withdrawal of other aspirants in favour of a single candidate, has in several instances become less of a negotiated agreement and more of a predetermined outcome. Across multiple states, party insiders who spoke to our reporter described a pattern where state executives and political structures aligned with sitting governors subtly or overtly pressure aspirants to step down, often before any formal contest begins. In Nasarawa State, Governor Abdullahi Sule's endorsement of Senator Ahmed Wadada has triggered quiet resistance within party ranks, with allegations that ward executives were influenced to align with the

attempts to impose a governorship candidate, describing the moves as contrary to democratic principles within the party. In Ogun State, particularly in Ijebu East, party members have also staged protests over what they allege to be the imposition of legislative aspirants, further highlighting the growing unease around the consensus mechanism. The situation in Yobe State has equally drawn attention, where a widely circulated photograph showing Governor Mai Mala Buni raising the hand of Alhaji Baba Malam Wali, a former Secretary to the State Government, was interpreted by many as a signal that the governorship decision had effectively been settled. In Borno State it was gathered that Governor Babagana Zulum's reported backing of former Commissioner for Works, Mustapha Gubio, has not gone unchallenged, as other aspirants continue to push back against what they view as a predetermined arrangement. Kwara State presents another layer of complexity, where Governor



governor's position. Some stakeholders, including former Inspector-General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, are said to have raised concerns over the process. A similar scenario is unfolding in Ebonyi State, where this newspaper gathered that Governor Francis Nwifuru presided over a high-level meeting in which certain aspirants were openly presented as preferred candidates.

The development drew caution from former Governor and current Minister of Works, David Umahi, who insisted that all aspirants must be allowed to purchase nomination forms without restriction. Despite this position, party sources explained that warnings have been issued within the state chapter of the APC, suggesting that any perceived defiance of the emerging consensus could be interpreted as disloyalty. In Adamawa State, reports that elders of the Gongola Peoples have openly rejected

AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq's preferred candidate is believed to be at odds with interests linked to the presidency, creating an unusual internal power contest. In Gombe State reports indicated that the emergence of Jamilu Gwamna as the consensus APC governorship candidate has faced resistance from party members who argue that the process ignored aspirants with stronger grassroots appeal.

Amid these developments, the APC National Chairman, Professor Nentawe Yilwatda, sought to clarify the party's official position on consensus candidacy. Speaking during a recent media engagement, Yilwatda emphasized that consensus remains a legitimate option under both the party's constitution and the Electoral Act, but insisted that it cannot be imposed. According to him, every aspirant who has purchased nomination forms must voluntarily agree in writing before a consensus candidate can be

recognized. “When it comes down to consensus, all the candidates who bought forms must sign an undertaking that they agree this person is their consensus candidate,” he stated. He further cited the example of Osun State, where multiple aspirants reportedly agreed to adopt a single candidate through a documented consensus process, a move that allowed the party to formally notify the electoral body of its chosen method.

Yilwatda also clarified that the APC operates both consensus and direct primary systems, stressing that the choice ultimately rests with stakeholders at the state level. “We cannot impose a method on anybody. If stakeholders do not agree on consensus, then the party will proceed with direct primaries,” he said. On the issue of automatic

For many party members, the concern is no longer whether consensus is legal, but whether it is still genuinely consensual. The storm is gathering and all Nigerians and the world is watching. The ruling APC should tread with caution and discontinue its alliance and arm twisting of state institutions to scuttle the democratic space and make it uncomfortable for the opposition. In a genuine democracy system, the wider the space the better for the people to make choices that will impact positively on democratic governance. Equally the state institutions like the INEC, EFCC, ICPC as well as the Judiciary should not pander to the whims and caprices of the ruling party at the expense of the opposition as this will amount to the betrayal of the Nigerian people and



tickets, which has surfaced in some political conversations, the APC chairman dismissed it as lacking any legal foundation. “There is no provision in the Constitution, our party guidelines, or the Electoral Act for automatic tickets. It is not something that can be guaranteed,” he added. Despite these assurances, findings by reveals that the reality on the ground remains far more complex, with political influence, power structures, and strategic interests continuing to shape outcomes well before formal processes begin. As the 2027 elections draw nearer, the growing tension around consensus candidacy raises broader questions about internal democracy within the APC and whether the mechanism, in its current form, can truly balance unity with fairness.

encourage a compromised system that could cast a slur not only on meaningful development but also the future of unborn generation. It is time for every actor in this democratic experience to play by the rules as done in advanced democracies. State Institutions as a matter of responsibility and patriotism should be stronger and operate above any individuals or personalities. This has been the bane of development in Nigeria and this pattern must change for the country to achieve its full potentials as a great nation.

Reports with contributions from Emmah Uhieneh, and HURIWA