

EDITOR'S NOTE

The fifth edition of the Tap Electoral & Human Rights Monitor tracks reported developments between 28 August and 4 September 2026 with potential implications for human rights, electoral participation and democratic governance. The incidents range from insecurity and access to justice to electoral administration, civic space, equality and public health.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This reporting period highlights how human rights conditions intersect with Nigeria's electoral environment. The reported kidnapping investigation before the International Criminal Court, concerns about civic space and media restrictions, and the reported development concerning an opposition candidate's ability to campaign raise questions about the conditions required for meaningful political participation.

Electoral administration also remains under scrutiny. INEC's response to allegations concerning candidate nominations places emphasis on audit trails and investigation, while the reported move to suspend a cyberbullying case involving a presidential candidate is notable in the context of the 2027 electoral process.

Reports concerning discrimination based on indigene status, access to court for awaiting-trial detainees and the continuing Lassa fever outbreak further demonstrate that participation is shaped by wider institutional and social conditions.

TOP ELECTORAL & HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS

1



Crimes Against Humanity: ICC Assigns Confidential Nigeria Kidnapping Investigation Request to Judges

The International Criminal Court reportedly assigned a confidential request seeking an investigation into alleged systemic kidnappings in Nigeria as crimes against humanity to its Pre-Trial Chamber II. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. Persistent and systemic kidnapping concerns engage the rights to life, liberty and security of person. Insecurity can also restrict freedom of movement and discourage citizens from participating in civic and electoral activities.

2



Economic Crime Is a Question of Social Justice: Court of Appeal President Warns of Erosion of Public Confidence

Motorists reportedly spent several days navigating the poor condition of the Benin–Asaba road, prompting renewed concerns over Nigeria’s deteriorating road infrastructure. The Federal Government reportedly announced plans to review concessioned roads. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. Accountability and effective institutions are central to democratic governance. Perceptions that public resources are diverted without consequences can weaken trust in government and democratic institutions.

3



INEC to Examine Records Following Allegation of ‘Smuggled Candidates’

INEC reportedly rejected allegations by the Nigeria Democratic Congress that candidates nominated for the 2027 elections were removed and replaced with names allegedly unknown to the party. The Commission said it would examine electronic records and audit trails. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. Transparent candidate nomination processes are important to electoral integrity. Accessible records, effective complaint mechanisms and credible investigations can help protect political parties’ rights and sustain confidence in election administration.

4



SSS Moves to Suspend Sowore Cyberbullying Case Until After 2027 Election

The State Security Service reportedly directed its private counsel to take steps toward suspending a cyberbullying case involving African Action Congress presidential candidate Omoyele Sowore until after the 2027 presidential election, to allow him to participate fully in the electoral process. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. The ability of candidates to campaign and participate without undue impediments is an important component of political participation. The development also highlights the need to balance law-enforcement processes with freedom of expression and political rights.

5



“SERAP, NGE Challenge Proposed Foreign Aid Bill Over Civic-Space and Media Concerns

SERAP and the Nigerian Guild of Editors reportedly urged the National Assembly leadership to withdraw or reject the proposed Foreign Aid (Regulation, Transparency and Disclosure) Bill, 2026, warning that proposed sanctions could affect media and civic space. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. A healthy electoral environment requires an open civic space in which civil society, journalists and citizens can operate without disproportionate restrictions. Measures affecting these actors may have implications for expression, association and access to information.

6



“State Cannot Use Indigene Status to Discriminate Against Workers, Court Rules

The National Industrial Court sitting in Yola reportedly held that the exclusion of 18 non-indigenous employees of the Taraba Publishing Company from redeployment into the Taraba State civil service on the basis of state of origin was unconstitutional and discriminatory, awarding ₦103.2 million. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. Protection against discrimination is fundamental to equal citizenship. Restrictions based on indigene status can affect access to employment and public opportunities and raise wider concerns about equality and inclusion.

7



Lassa Fever Death Toll Rises to 252 as NCDC Records 1,035 Confirmed Cases Across 23 States

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention reportedly recorded 14 new confirmed Lassa fever cases, bringing the 2026 cumulative total to 1,035 confirmed cases and 252 deaths across 23 states. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. Public health emergencies can disrupt ordinary social and economic activity and disproportionately affect vulnerable communities. Electoral-cycle preparedness is important to ensuring safe access to public spaces and civic activities.



“46 Awaiting-Trial Inmates Miss Court Hearings in Akwa Ibom Correctional Centre

At least 46 awaiting-trial inmates at the Medium Security Correctional Centre in Eket, Akwa Ibom State, were reportedly unable to attend court proceedings because the facility had no functional vehicles to convey them to court. [Read More →](#)

Human Rights & Electoral Implications. Access to court is a core component of the right to a fair hearing and access to justice. Logistical failures that prevent detainees from appearing before court can prolong detention and undermine due-process protections.

RIGHTS AT RISK

The incidents monitored during this period reveal several rights that may affect citizens’ ability to participate meaningfully in democratic processes.

RIGHT	WHY IT MATTERS THIS WEEK
Right to Life, Liberty & Security	Kidnapping and insecurity continue to threaten citizens and communities
Political Participation	Candidates and parties require an environment free from undue impediments or intimidation.
Freedom of Expression & Association	Proposed restrictions affecting media and civic organisations may narrow civic space.
Electoral Integrity	Candidate nomination concerns highlight the importance of transparent records and processes.
Equality & Non-Discrimination	The Taraba decision underscores concerns around discrimination based on state of origin.
Access to Justice & Fair Hearing	Awaiting-trial detainees reportedly missed hearings because of transportation failures.
Right to Health	The continuing Lassa fever outbreak highlights the importance of public-health preparedness.

TAP INSIGHT

Free Elections Require More Meaningful Participation and Accountability

The developments monitored this week reinforce an important point that electoral participation cannot be separated from the wider human-rights environment. A person may have the formal right to vote, but insecurity, restrictions on civic space, exclusion, lack of access to justice or distrust in institutions can make the exercise of that right difficult in practice.

The reported concerns around candidate nominations are particularly relevant to electoral integrity. Political parties and candidates depend on transparent administrative processes to ensure that the people they nominate are properly reflected on the ballot. Where questions arise about candidate information, credible investigation and accessible audit trails are essential for public confidence.

The reported move to suspend a cyberbullying case involving a presidential candidate also demonstrates the importance of safeguarding political participation. Candidates must be able to campaign and communicate with voters while legitimate legal processes remain fair, proportionate and consistent with fundamental rights.

Civic space is equally important. Journalists, civil society organisations and citizens play a critical role in informing the public, scrutinising institutions and drawing attention to rights concerns. Any legal framework that could impose disproportionate sanctions on civic or media actors therefore deserves careful scrutiny, particularly as Nigeria approaches the 2027 elections.

Finally, the reports on discrimination, access to justice and public health demonstrate that democratic participation is connected to everyday rights. Strong elections require institutions that protect equal citizenship, uphold due process, respond effectively to insecurity and create conditions in which people can participate safely and freely.

LOOKING AHEAD

As Nigeria moves further toward the 2027 general elections, the coming weeks will be important for watching whether the concerns identified in this edition are addressed, persist or develop into wider patterns affecting participation and public confidence:

- ▶ Developments concerning insecurity and reported systemic kidnapping, including accountability and protection of affected communities.
- ▶ INEC's handling of candidate nomination disputes, including examination of electronic records and audit trails.
- ▶ Developments affecting political candidates' ability to campaign and participate in the electoral process.
- ▶ Legislative and policy developments that may affect civic space, media freedom and civil society operations.
- ▶ Implementation of equality and non-discrimination standards in access to public employment and opportunities.
- ▶ Access-to-justice concerns in correctional facilities, particularly the ability of awaiting-trial detainees to attend court.
- ▶ Public-health developments that could affect safe access to public spaces and civic activities.

TAP INITIATIVE FOR CITIZENS' DEVELOPMENT

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