KIMPACT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

**PRESS STATEMENT**

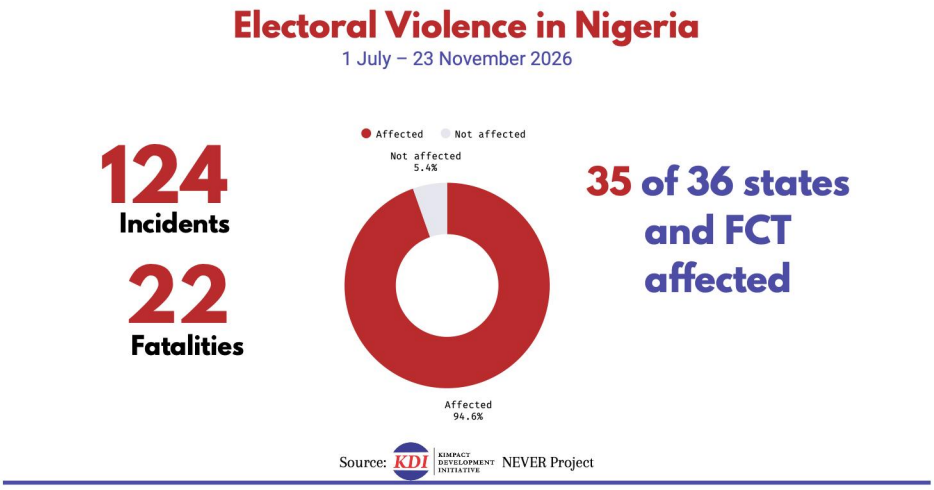
# 53 DAYS TO THE 2027 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: KDI WARNS AGAINST ESCALATING POLITICAL VIOLENCE, CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**Abuja, Nigeria | 24 November 2026**

With only **53 days remaining before Nigeria's Presidential and National Assembly Elections scheduled for 16 January 2027**, Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI) is deeply concerned by the growing pattern of political and electoral violence being recorded across the country. Through its **Nigeria Election Violence Education and Reporting (NEVER) Project**, KDI has observed a deteriorating pre-election environment increasingly characterised by intimidation, violent rhetoric, physical assaults, kidnappings, shootings, destruction of campaign infrastructure, and other forms of politically motivated violence.

These trends pose a significant threat to citizens' participation, democratic freedoms, electoral integrity, and public confidence in the electoral process.

Between **1st July and 23rd November 2026**, the NEVER Project documented **124 incidents of electoral violence**, resulting in **22 fatalities** and affecting **35 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)**. These figures illustrate both the national scale of the challenge and the urgent need for coordinated interventions by political actors, security agencies, electoral institutions, and citizens.






Source: KDI KIMPACT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE NEVER Project

**Rising Violence Since the Commencement of Campaigns**

KDI's monitoring reveals a concerning correlation between the commencement of presidential campaigns and the escalation of violent incidents. Recorded cases increased from **3 incidents in July** to **48 incidents in October and** reached **40 incidents within the first half of November alone**.

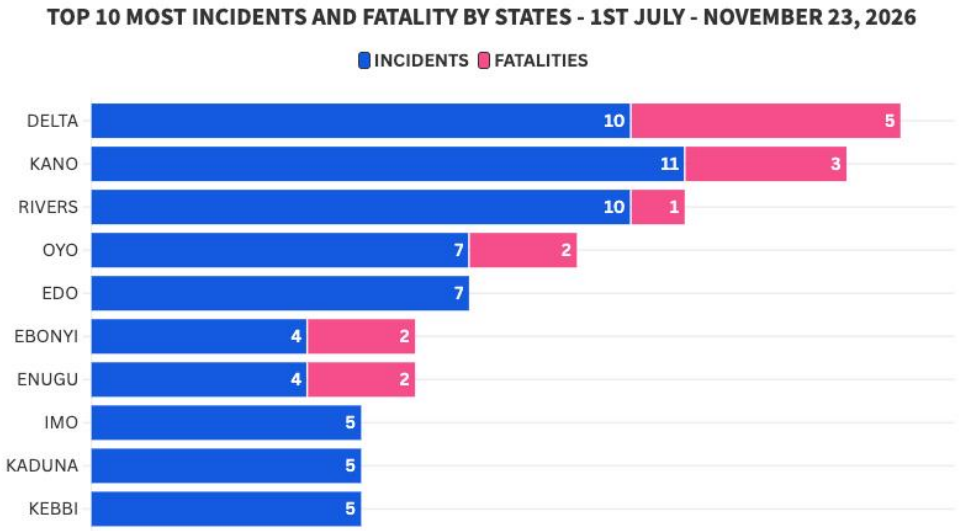
While fluctuations are expected during election periods, the overall trajectory suggests that electoral competition is becoming increasingly accompanied by violence and intimidation. If left unchecked, these trends could intensify further as election day approaches.

**Escalating Political Rhetoric and Intolerance**

KDI is particularly concerned about the increasingly hostile tone of political engagement across the country. Political discourse is becoming marked by threats, inflammatory statements, and rhetoric that can encourage hostility among supporters and deepen divisions within communities. This pattern is observable across party lines and should not be viewed as the responsibility of any single political party or actor.

Democratic competition thrives when ideas, policies, and programmes are contested peacefully. When political actors resort to dangerous rhetoric, they create conditions that can normalize violence and embolden supporters to take unlawful actions.

KDI therefore calls on all political parties, candidates, spokespersons, and campaign organizations to publicly commit to issue-based campaigns and to refrain from language capable of inciting violence or undermining social cohesion.

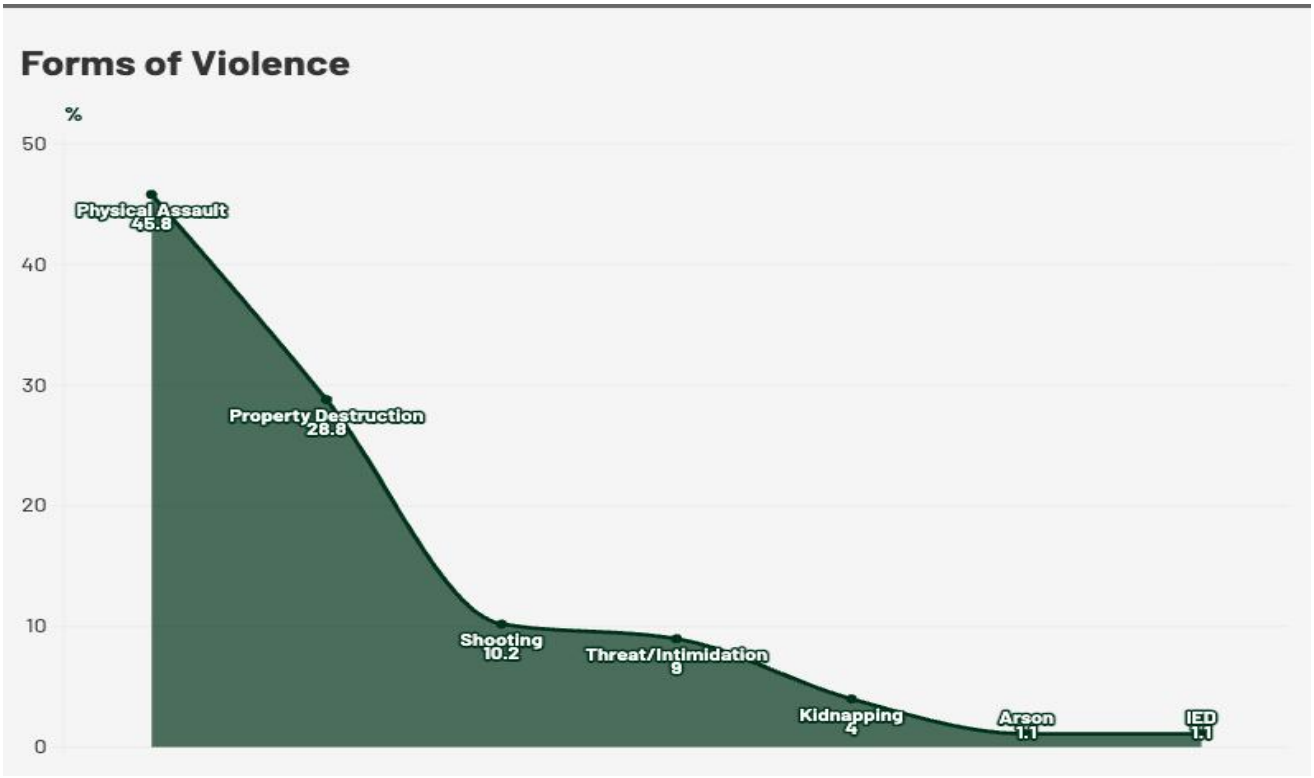



**Electoral Violence Has Become a Nationwide Threat**

The NEVER Project findings demonstrate that electoral violence is no longer restricted to a few traditional hotspots. Documentation from **35 states and the FCT** confirms that violence has become a nationwide concern requiring a coordinated national response. States with significant levels of incidents include **Kano, Delta, Rivers, Edo, Ondo, and Kebbi**, although incidents have been reported across numerous other states.

The widespread nature of these incidents highlights the urgent need for security agencies, electoral stakeholders, and community leaders to adopt proactive measures that prevent escalation and protect citizens' democratic rights.

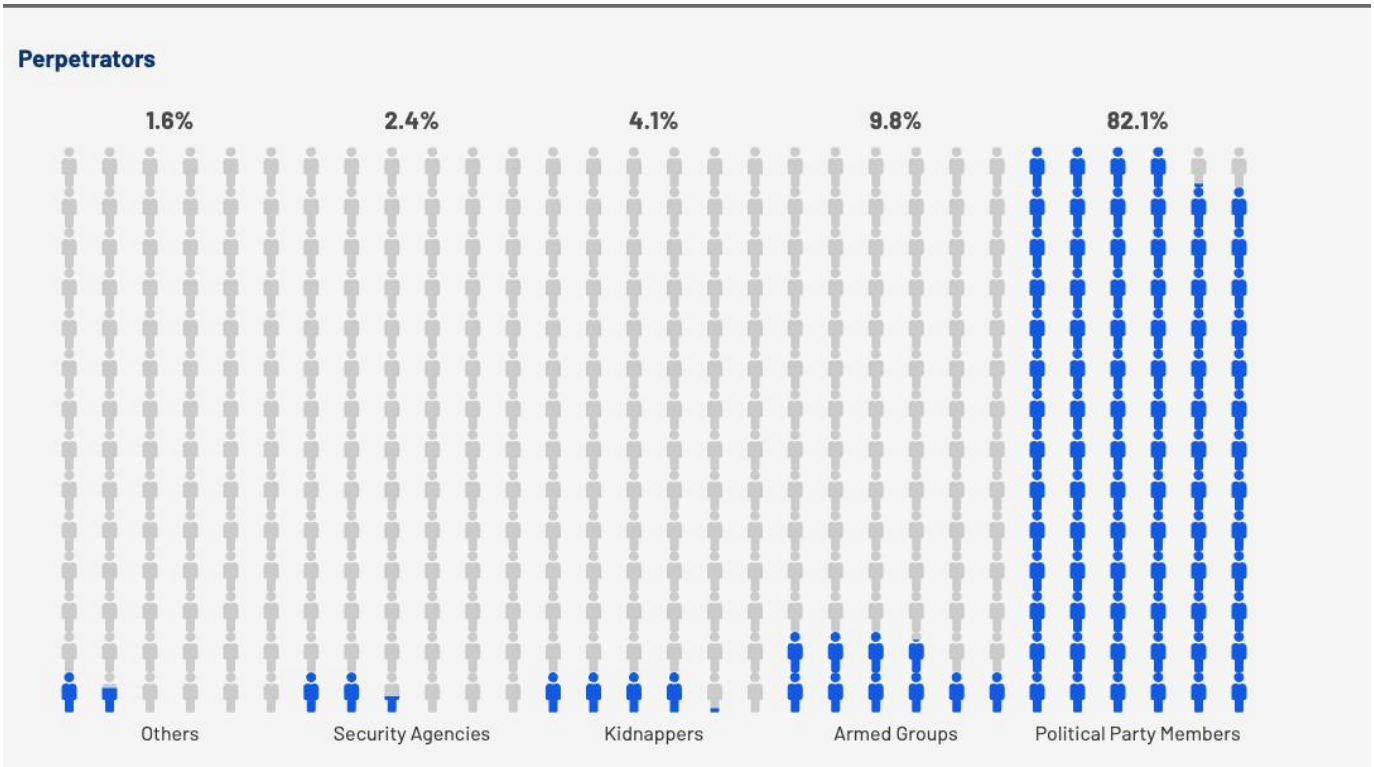
The forms of violence documented reveal the breadth of the problem. These include **46.8% of physical assault, 28.8% of property destruction, 10.2% related to shootings, 9% for incidents of intimidation and harassment, and 4% of kidnappings**. Particularly alarming is the growing prevalence of intimidation targeted at political supporters, civil servants, journalists, and ordinary citizens who seek to participate in the democratic process.




**Political Actors Must Take Responsibility**

The data further indicate that political actors remain central to the pattern of electoral violence. Findings from the NEVER Project (July 1 – Nov 23, 2026) show that political party members and affiliated groups were identified as perpetrators in 82.3% of recorded violence incidents and as victims in 86.5%.

These findings underscore the responsibility of political parties and candidates to exercise effective control over their campaign structures, supporters, and mobilisation networks. Political leaders must take concrete measures to discourage violence, sanction supporters who engage in unlawful conduct, and publicly demonstrate their commitment to peaceful elections. KDI is additionally concerned about growing reports of political intolerance in parts of the country, including restrictions on opposition activities, abuse of administrative authority, and denial of equitable opportunities for political participation and campaigning. Such practices undermine democratic principles and risk increasing tensions in already fragile environments.




**Closing the Electoral Accountability Gap**

Beyond the rising violence itself, KDI remains concerned about the persistent gap between condemnation by the authorities, arrests and actual accountability. Since January 2026, several arrests linked to electoral violence have been publicly reported across different states. However, KDI has not identified publicly available evidence demonstrating corresponding prosecutions or convictions in many of these cases.

This accountability deficit weakens deterrence and can create the perception that perpetrators of electoral violence can act with impunity. Sustainable reduction of election-related violence requires not only preventive measures but also visible enforcement of the law.

KDI therefore calls on relevant law enforcement agencies, prosecutorial authorities, and the judiciary to ensure that perpetrators of electoral violence are investigated promptly, prosecuted transparently, and held accountable in accordance with the law.

**The Time for Preventive Action Is Now**

With less than two months before the presidential election, the opportunity to prevent a larger crisis is rapidly closing. Peaceful elections cannot be guaranteed through election-day deployments alone. Violence prevention must begin well before polling day through coordinated early warning, rapid response, civic engagement, and enforcement actions.

KDI is concerned that the current reactive approach to electoral violence could place significant pressure on security agencies during the election period and potentially overwhelm available response mechanisms if preventive measures are not strengthened.

Accordingly, KDI calls on:

- **Political parties and candidates** to publicly commit to peaceful campaigns and restrain supporters from engaging in violence;
- **Security agencies** to strengthen preventive deployment, respond rapidly to warning signs, and enforce electoral laws impartially;
- **The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)** and other electoral stakeholders to intensify voter education and conflict-mitigation efforts;
- **Civil society organizations, religious institutions, traditional leaders, and the media** to promote peace, tolerance, and responsible political engagement; and
- **Citizens** to reject violence, resist manipulation, and report threats and incidents through appropriate channels.

**Democracy Must Not Be Decided by Violence**

Every Nigerian must be able to participate in the electoral process without fear of intimidation, coercion, violence, or reprisals. Elections should be determined by the free expression of citizens' choices, not by threats, force, or political intimidation.

Nigeria's democracy has made important gains over the past two decades. Protecting those gains requires collective commitment from political leaders, institutions, and citizens alike. The warning signs are already visible, and the cost of inaction could be significant.

Nigeria cannot afford to wait until election day to address a crisis that is already unfolding. The time to act is now.

**Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI)**
**Abuja, Nigeria**

**24 November 2026**

**Media Contact:**
Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI)
Email: info@kimpact.org.ng
Website: www.kimpact.org.ng