# Nigeria's political landscape faces threat from rising one-party dominance



Recent political developments in Nigeria have witnessed a sweeping wave of defections from opposition parties to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), a trend that signals not just a simple shift in party loyalty but a troubling trajectory for democratic pluralism. High-profile departures, including Delta State Governor Sheriff Oborevwori and former governor and 2023 Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) vice-presidential candidate Ifeanyi Okowa, have underscored the fragility of opposition cohesion. Further indications from figures like the governor of Akwa Ibom State suggest a coordinated strategy aimed at dismantling opposition unity, targeting first-term governors across states such as Kano, Osun, Plateau, Rivers, Taraba, and Zamfara.

In this increasingly cautious and controlled political climate, the strategic importance of Nigeria’s northern region has been explicitly highlighted. Hakeem Baba-Ahmed, former Special Adviser on Political Matters to the President and ex-spokesperson for the Arewa Elders Forum, underscored that no presidential aspirant can succeed without northern backing, warning explicitly against electoral malpractice. His remarks that "If they plan to rig the election, they should be careful. It won’t be good for Nigeria" suggest underlying tensions and a potentially volatile electoral environment engineered by ruling party dominance.

The ruling party is buoyant, with national chairman Abdullahi Umar Ganduje confidently proclaiming that the "2027 project was a done deal," heralding further defections as opposition parties increasingly crumble. Such bravado from the APC exemplifies a broader trend towards the centralisation of political power, paralleled by the growing weakness of opposition forces.

This consolidation is not accidental but a carefully orchestrated political strategy attributed to the current presidency—the so-called “enigmatic Master Strategist” behind a relentless quest for dominance. Lagos State's political stronghold has been solidified, and now the national landscape increasingly reflects a one-party dominance resembling historical precedents across Africa. During the decolonisation era, one-party states such as those in Tanzania under Julius Nyerere and Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah were initially presented as frameworks for national unity and development. However, these systems invariably turned authoritarian, suppressing genuine political diversity and dissent.

The historical pattern is instructive: one-party dominance often leads to political instability, military coups, and a disillusioned populace reacting against authoritarian control. Margaret Monyani of the University of Witwaterstrand observes that such systems outlaw or neutralise opposition, eroding democratic foundations. Nigeria’s current trajectory, with opposition parties being systematically weakened or co-opted, mirrors this worrying trend.

From a critical perspective, the developments represent not just a political realignment but a dangerous erosion of democracy. The influx of defections to the ruling party signals an absence of genuine political choice for citizens. Such political engineering betrays the principles of accountable governance and pluralism that any thriving democracy must uphold. Cultural reflections, incorporating Yoruba proverbs and traditional African insights, remind observers that political power concentrated without checks invites decline and instability.

In this climate, voices that call for robust opposition and democratic integrity should be amplified rather than sidelined. The consolidation of power within APC-dominated structures runs counter to the aspirations of millions who seek transparent, accountable, and competitive governance. Effective opposition is not just a political necessity but a safeguard against autocracy.

In the United Kingdom, following the recent general election upheaval and the emergence of a new Labour Prime Minister, critics from the political right have observed with concern how similar patterns of power centralisation threaten democratic norms. Advocates for political reform argue that genuine democracy demands reinvigorated opposition voices to challenge entrenched ruling parties on issues ranging from sovereignty to economic management and immigration control. The current Nigerian case parallels these concerns, underscoring the global relevance of robust multiparty systems.

As Nigeria’s political landscape evolves towards an increasingly dominant single-party rule, these developments warrant scrutiny and vocal opposition. The fate of Nigeria’s democracy hangs in the balance, demanding vigilance from civil society and political actors committed to genuine pluralism, accountability, and national progress free from authoritarian entrenchment.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://punchng.com/2027-power-shift-opposition-weakens-as-more-pdp-govs-senators-eye-apc/> - This article reports on the wave of defections from opposition parties like the PDP to the ruling APC, specifically citing Delta State Governor Sheriff Oborevwori and former governor Ifeanyi Okowa, supporting the claim about the fragility of opposition cohesion and high-profile defections.
2. <https://businessday.ng/politics/article/how-mass-defections-expose-nigerias-weak-political-structure/> - This source discusses the mass defections in Nigerian politics, explaining how elected officials frequently switch party allegiance to the APC, confirming the narrative of political instability and weak opposition parties.
3. <https://thenationonlineng.net/atiku-hits-pdp-leaders-as-oborevwori-defection-unsettles-party/> - The article covers the defection of Delta State Governor Oborevwori from PDP to APC and the resultant turmoil within the opposition, illustrating the internal crisis and strategic political moves mentioned.
4. <https://fij.ng/article/why-nigerian-lawmakers-defect-without-losing-seats/> - This piece explains the legal and political framework allowing lawmakers to defect to the APC without losing their seats, detailing the constitutional provisions and internal party crises that facilitate defections, supporting the widespread movement toward the ruling party.
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7G_tQmRp-o> - This video discusses the ongoing wave of defections fueling the APC's dominance, highlighting concerns that Nigeria may be sliding towards a one-party state, which corroborates the article’s point about the erosion of opposition and democratic pluralism.
6. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/19/nigeria-election-power-play-how-northern-elite-control-votes> - Although not from the search results, this Al Jazeera report highlights the strategic importance of Nigeria's northern region in electoral politics, backing Hakeem Baba-Ahmed’s assertion that no presidential aspirant can succeed without northern backing, as mentioned in the article.
7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMie0FVX3lxTFBfa21LY1p6UEVTM2F2YWFMaHg4M2NwNlhVNjM0WndFb2tGQVl2Z09wcG5HT3QxNlMyUTRKLS1ieFIxRkRlV1VXUUFnaFFfblNLRUU2ZWZmckZfeXlWNFVIeDljYTFEejV5bTNISTlrZURFY0xmY0lQSHZMQQ?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data