

## KANO STATE

Kano has the second largest number of registered voters with 5,457,747, representing 6.5% of total voters in Nigeria. For a long time, both parties have considered the State as central to their winning strategy. For the APC, the objective is to get a maximum number of votes for Muhammadu Buhari who has a large cult following in the State. Governor Ganduje has spoken about delivering 5 million votes for Buhari. Of course, this is impossible because only 4,681, 492 voters have collected their PVCs in the State.

The strategy of the PDP is not be to win but to reduce the margin of victory of Buhari. It is for this reason that they worked very hard to get both Senator Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso and Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau in one camp contesting against President Muhammadu Buhari. The cocktail was too toxic and Shekarau went to APC when Kwankwaso defected to PDP. The real battle in Kano however is between Kwankwasiyya and Gandujiyya which is basically over the governorship and senatorial seats. The former is a mass political movement led by Senator Rabi'u Kwankwaso, former presidential aspirant under the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), former governor and ex-minister.

On the other divide is incumbent governor, Umar Ganduje, an estranged aide and protégé of Kwankwaso, who has sworn to retire his former benefactor from Kano politics in the coming polls. Both men have large following and would be leading their team of contestants for legislative posts under the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) respectively. This testy proxy battle makes Kano a battleground state for the gubernatorial and legislative polls. Shekarau, a two-term former governor and former Minister of Education under the Jonathan administration clinched the APC ticket for Senate. He cannot be said to be Gandujiyya adherent as he controls his own parallel political clout in the state. It is going to be difficult to predict exactly who will win the elections this Saturday.

It is expected that President Muhammadu Buhari would probably remain an unchecked tsunami as far the 2019 Presidential election is concerned in Kano State. He did get 2.9 million votes from his primary election but that number appeared to have been concocted but clearly, the intention of his supporters is to approach that number during the elections.

That might be difficult as in 2015, the total number of voters in Kano was just 2,172,447. The expectation of the PDP is that Kwankwaso would be able to reduce the force of the Buhari Tsunami and get considerable votes for Atiku Abubakar. This however would be difficult as his central political message of restructuring is not very palatable to the people of Kano. Finally, there are concerns that the battle between Ganguje and Kwankwaso could lead to political violence. It would be recalled that in 2015, the Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) in charge of Kano was found burnt with his family in the aftermath of the election, an act many alleged was an assassination. Kano, it would be recalled has witnessed a series of incidences of electoral violence over the years.



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