

THE PEOPLE'S VERDICT

OSUN HAS FINALLY DECIDED

After months of political realignment, legal uncertainty, security concerns and an intensely fought campaign, Osun voters renew Governor Ademola Adeleke's mandate.

RE ELECTED GOVERNOR

ADEMOLA ADELEKE

ACCORD PARTY



511,067 VOTES



19 OF 30 LGAs WON



WINNING MARGIN: 66,252



BOLA OYEBAMIJI • APC

444,815 VOTES • 11 LGAs WON



ACCORD

Ownership & Progress

OSUN CHOOSES CONTINUITY

INSIDE THIS REPORT

Threats • Obstacles • Challenges • Major Takeaways

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THE CAMPAIGN IS OVER.
THE REAL WORK BEGINS.

THE VERDICT

A DIFFICULT ROAD TO REELECTION

CONTINUED FROM THE COVER

Governor Ademola Adeleke of the Accord Party secured a second term after defeating Bola Oyebamiji of the All Progressives Congress in the August 15, 2026 governorship election.

Adeleke polled 511,067 votes and won 19 of the state's 30 local government areas. Oyebamiji received 444,815 votes and carried 11 local government areas. The governor was returned elected with a winning margin of 66,252 votes.

The outcome represents more than a personal victory for Adeleke. It concluded one of the most intense and unpredictable political contests in the recent history of Osun State.

A DIFFICULT ROAD TO REELECTION

Adeleke entered the contest as the incumbent governor, but his path to victory was far from certain.

His movement from the Peoples Democratic Party to the Accord Party shortly before the election introduced a major element of uncertainty. The PDP was the platform through which he had built much of his political structure and won the governorship in 2022.

Leaving that established platform presented a serious risk. There were questions about whether his supporters would follow him into Accord, whether voters

would recognise the party's symbol and whether the smaller platform possessed the organisation required to compete across the state.

The crisis within the PDP further complicated the atmosphere. Prolonged disagreements over the party's leadership and governorship ticket created confusion among members and supporters.

Legal decisions concerning the PDP's participation came very close to the election, leaving the party with limited time to organise an effective campaign. Although sections of the PDP encouraged their supporters to back Adeleke, uncertainty within the party remained one of the forces shaping the contest.

“Many voters appeared to identify with the candidate and his record more than with the platform on which he contested.”

Adeleke's victory demonstrated that his political support extended beyond the party through which he originally came to power. His movement was able to transfer loyalty from an established platform to a less familiar one and still produce a statewide majority.

CONFRONTING THE APC

MACHINE

Another major obstacle was the formidable political machinery behind Oyebamiji. As the party controlling the Federal Government, the APC brought considerable influence, organisation and resources into the Osun contest.

Governors, ministers, National Assembly members and senior party leaders participated in the campaign to return Osun to the APC. The election was treated as a strategic contest ahead of the 2027 general election.

Oyebamiji was also a strong challenger with experience in government and an established political network. His campaign questioned the management of state resources and argued that the Adeleke administration had not done enough with the increased federal allocations available to Osun.

The APC framed the election as a choice between continuity and a more financially disciplined administration. Adeleke defended his record and asked voters to judge him by the projects, policies and programmes delivered during his first term.

Despite the national strength behind the APC campaign, Osun voters chose to retain the incumbent. The result reinforced a basic democratic principle: federal influence and elite endorsements may shape a

contest, but they cannot automatically replace grassroots acceptance.

A MANDATE THAT CROSSED PARTY LINES

Winning 19 local government areas gave Adeleke more than a numerical advantage. It showed that his support was distributed widely enough to withstand the organisational pressure mounted by the APC. The victory was not secured by one community alone, even though his political base remained important.

The result also suggested that the governor successfully persuaded many former PDP supporters to locate him on a different ballot line. That required sustained voter education, disciplined ward organisation and a campaign message that kept the candidate at the centre of the contest.

For Accord, the election transformed a relatively modest platform into the vehicle of a sitting governor. The greater test will be whether the party can develop durable institutions of its own or remain dependent on Adeleke's personal political network.

For the APC, the vote total confirmed that the party remains a major force in Osun. Its defeat was not a collapse but a failure to convert a strong statewide presence into the additional support required to overcome an incumbent with deep local connections.

THE PRESSURES

VIOLENCE, INDUCEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL TESTS

FEAR OF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION

The campaign period was marked by serious concerns about violence, intimidation and inflammatory political rhetoric.

Supporters of the two leading parties repeatedly accused one another of attacks, destruction of campaign materials and attempts to suppress political activities in certain communities.

There were also reports of clashes, shootings and threats against political opponents. These developments created fear among residents and raised questions about whether voters would be able to participate freely.

The reported death of a 14 year old boy who was struck by a stray bullet during a political clash in Ilobu brought the human consequences of electoral violence into painful focus. It demonstrated what can happen when political competition is allowed to escape the boundaries of democratic engagement.

Civil society organisations and community leaders repeatedly appealed for restraint. They warned political actors against turning an election into a contest of force rather than a democratic choice between candidates.

“No electoral victory is

worth the life of a citizen. Political competition must never become a licence for intimidation or bloodshed.”

The heavy presence of security personnel produced mixed reactions. Many residents welcomed stronger protection, while others feared that excessive deployment could intimidate voters or create doubts about the neutrality of the process.

In the end, people turned out despite the tense atmosphere. Their participation showed that intimidation did not completely defeat their determination to make a choice.

THE PERSISTENT PROBLEM OF VOTE BUYING

Allegations of voter inducement featured prominently before and during the election. Both leading political camps faced accusations that money was being offered to influence voters.

Whether every allegation can be independently established or not, the frequency of such reports reflects a wider problem confronting Nigerian elections.

Economic hardship has made many citizens vulnerable to inducement. Political actors exploit that vulnerability by offering immediate financial assistance in exchange for electoral support.

The practice reduces a constitutional right to a commercial transaction. It weakens accountability because candidates who purchase votes may feel less obligated to provide responsible leadership after taking office.

Osun's experience shows that electoral reforms must go beyond technology and security. Authorities must develop more effective methods of identifying, preventing and prosecuting those who finance or participate in vote buying.

THE TEST OF ELECTORAL TECHNOLOGY

The effectiveness of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System was another source of anxiety. Reports from the mock exercise indicated that some devices experienced difficulty recognising fingerprints, facial features and older voter records.

The late inclusion of parties following court decisions also placed pressure on the Independent National Electoral Commission. Changes made close to an election can affect ballot production, distribution of materials and the timely opening of polling units.

Although the election was concluded and a winner declared, these concerns underline the need for better preparation. Electoral technology must be tested thoroughly, legal disputes resolved early and sensitive materials delivered on schedule.

A REFERENDUM ON THE FIRST TERM

At the centre of the contest was Adeleke's record in office. He campaigned on infrastructure, education, healthcare, workers' welfare and community development. Oyebamiji offered a different assessment, questioning priorities, public finance and the use of increased revenue.

The electorate was presented with a direct choice between continuing with Adeleke and transferring power to the APC. By giving the governor 511,067 votes and victories in 19 local government areas, a majority of participating voters chose continuity.

That decision does not suggest that every resident is satisfied with every aspect of the administration. It means that when the two leading options were weighed, more voters preferred to give Adeleke another four years. The result is both an endorsement and a warning: it rewards the first term but raises expectations for the second.

THE LESSONS

WHAT THE RESULT MEANS AND WHAT COMES NEXT

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS FROM THE ELECTION

The Osun result offers lessons for candidates, political parties, electoral institutions and the electorate as Nigeria moves towards the 2027 general election.

1. PERSONAL POLITICAL CAPITAL CAN CROSS PARTY LINES
Adeleke left the PDP and contested on the Accord platform, yet retained enough support to win. Many voters were motivated by the candidate, his record and his relationship with the electorate rather than by party loyalty alone.
2. FEDERAL POWER HAS LIMITS
The APC deployed an extensive national campaign structure, but the final decision remained with Osun voters. National influence can support a candidate, but it cannot guarantee victory where local acceptance is insufficient.
3. PERFORMANCE REMAINS POLITICALLY VALUABLE
Adeleke was required to defend nearly four years in office. His victory suggests that a majority of participating voters saw enough progress to justify renewing his mandate.
4. GRASSROOTS ORGANISATION DECIDES CLOSE CONTESTS
Large rallies, prominent endorsements and media campaigns generate attention, but elections are won through effective mobilisation in communities, wards and

polling units.

5. THE PROMISE OF CHANGE MUST BE PERSUASIVE
A challenger needs more than criticism of an incumbent. The alternative must be clear, credible and connected to the daily priorities of voters.
6. VOTER PARTICIPATION REMAINS A CONCERN
Although more than one million people were accredited, fewer than half of registered voters participated. The number who stayed away raises questions about apathy, fear, accessibility and confidence in the political system.

“The campaign is over. The mandate has been renewed. The real work must begin.”

VICTORY MUST GIVE WAY TO GOVERNANCE

The celebrations will end, but the responsibilities attached to the mandate will remain. Adeleke must recognise that 444,815 voters supported Oyebamiji. Those voters are also citizens of Osun State whose communities, interests and expectations must be represented by the government.

The governor's second term should not be driven by political retaliation or the exclusion of opposition strongholds. It should be built on reconciliation, accountability and development across every part of the state.

The administration must address outstanding concerns about employment, healthcare, education, infrastructure, agriculture, public finance and opportunities for young people. It must improve transparency and show that the renewed mandate will produce greater results.

THE FIRST TESTS OF THE SECOND TERM

The earliest months of the new mandate will help determine whether the victory becomes a platform for deeper reform or merely an extension of existing politics. The administration should publish clear priorities, realistic timelines and measurable targets against which citizens can assess progress.

Particular attention must be paid to jobs and the productive economy. Roads and public buildings are important, but households will judge government by whether young people can find opportunities, small businesses can grow and farmers can move their produce profitably.

Fiscal openness will also be essential. The debate over federal allocations will not disappear with the election. Regular disclosure of revenues, debt obligations, project costs and implementation progress would allow the government to answer criticism with evidence rather than political argument.

A SIGNAL BEYOND OSUN

The outcome will be studied beyond the state because it came ahead of the 2027

general election. It shows ruling and opposition parties alike that voters cannot always be moved by national momentum, prominent endorsements or assumptions about regional loyalty.

For political leaders, the message is clear: build trust before election season, remain present in communities and offer a record or programme that speaks directly to the lives of citizens.

A second term is often the true test of leadership. The governor will no longer need to campaign for reelection, but he will have to consider the legacy he intends to leave behind.

The election has settled the question of who will govern Osun for the next four years. It has not settled the more important question of how effectively the state will be governed.

OSUN HAS FINALLY DECIDED

The people have chosen continuity over change and renewed their confidence in Ademola Adeleke. The obstacles were considerable, the campaign was difficult and the contest remained competitive until the final declaration.

Osun voters were confronted with powerful interests, competing narratives and an atmosphere of uncertainty. Despite these pressures, they delivered a clear verdict.

The campaign is now over. The mandate has been renewed. The real work must begin.