***DAILY***

**BULLETIN**

**VOLUME:2    N0:217     DATE: 18thAugust, 2022**

**2023: PROF. YAKUBU MAKES CASE FOR INCREASED PROMOTION OF ISSUE-   BASED POLITICS BY THE MEDIA**

**Few weeks to the official commencement of campaigns by political parties for the 2023 General Election, Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, has expressed the Commission’s willingness to co-operate with Media organisations in order to promote issue-based politics in the country.**

The INEC Chairman observed that issue-based politics is central to electoral democracy, and noted that the more Media organisations engage parties and their candidates on issue-based politics, the better our electoral democracy.

The Chairman made the observation when he received a delegation from the Media Trust Group, led by the Chairman of the Daily Trust Advisory Board on 2023 General Election, Prof. Jibrin Ibrahim, at the INEC Headquarters, Abuja, on Wednesday, 17th August, 2022.

Prof. Yakubu observed that “the Nigerian Election Debate Group has been doing its best and also other Media outlets have been doing their best organising debates before major off-season elections and during the General Election.”

He said “I am happy that one of the major Media organizations in the country is also joining to advance the cause of our democracy. The more organisations engage the better the electoral democracy.”

The Chairman appreciated Daily Trust for its objective and professional coverage of INEC and its activities, as well as the electoral process generally. He welcomed their involvement in election debate and urged them to extend their advocacy and engagement to cover areas usually not covered by the mainstream media.

He assured that the Commission is a willing partner in progress and will continue to operate an open-door policy with the Media in terms of content and information sharing. Prof. Yakubu maintained that INEC is duty bound as a public service institution to do so, and would respond to specific request by Media organisations in the interest of the electoral process and the country.

Earlier, while explaining the purpose of their visit, the Leader of the delegation, Prof. Jibrin Ibrahim, said that they were at the Commission’s Headquarters to brief the Management of INEC on their plans for the 2023 General Election.

He said Daily Trust and its associated Media platforms were very committed to the promotion of issue-based politics in the country.  “We believe that this 2023 election is the opportunity to raise the question of issue-based politics to its highest point in our history. We are aware that the Commission its self is very much part of that culture of the promotion of the issue-based politics”, Prof. Jibrin added.

The Leader of the Trust delegation added that “given our commitment as a media group, we are planning a number of specific interventions that relate to making the campaigns a central fulcrum around which issues will emerge on which voters will take their decisions on which candidate and party to support”.

Prof. Jibrin explained further that INEC will be one of the pillars around which the series of media activities will be organised due to its key role in the electoral process. He requested members of the Commission to be part of some of the programmes to provide clarification where necessary for INEC to provide content and information as well.

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