

Kogi State Tribunal Upholds Ododo's Election as Governor

ABUJA, Nigeria — The Kogi State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal has affirmed Usman Ododo as the duly elected Governor of Kogi State, dismissing the petition filed by Muritala Ajaka of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). The ruling solidifies Ododo's position as the legitimate governor following the November 11, 2023, election.

Led by Justice Ado Birnin-Kudu, the three-member tribunal concluded that the petitioners failed to substantiate their claims of electoral malpractice and other irregularities against Ododo, the All Progressives Congress (APC) candidate. The tribunal highlighted the petitioners' inability to present sufficient evidence, including the striking out of testimony from their star witness, an Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) official, who was deemed incompetent.

Furthermore, the tribunal noted inconsistencies in the evidence provided by the petitioners' witnesses and the lack of proper analysis of the documents submitted to the court. Regarding the petitioners' claim of non-compliance with the Electoral Act of 2022, Justice Birnin-Kudu emphasized their failure to prove their case, despite presenting numerous documents and calling 25 out of over 600 listed witnesses.

The tribunal also found that the petitioners did not provide competent witnesses to support their claims of over-voting and failed to substantiate allegations of forgery of academic certificates by Ododo. Consequently, all grounds of the petition were dismissed.

The ruling affirmed Ododo's victory as announced by INEC, where he secured 446,237 votes, compared to Ajaka's 259,052 votes, and Dino Melaye of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), who garnered 46,362 votes. Justice Birnin-Kudu declared the petition incompetent and dismissed it in its entirety.

This judgment reinforces Ododo's position as the elected Governor of Kogi State and underscores the validity of the elections that brought him to Office, thus upholding the rule of law and due process.

Kogipedia felicitates with Governor Ododo on this judgment and wishes him great success in discharging the onerous duties of his office.

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