

**NBA
ELECTORAL
AUDIT AND
REFORM
COMMITTEE**

FINAL REPORT

MARCH 2021



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GLOSSARY

BPF	Bar Practicing Fees
DND	Do Not Disturb
ECNBA	Electoral Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
E-Voting	Electronic Voting
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
NBA	Nigerian Bar Association
NEC	National Executive Committee
NIN	National Identification Number
RFP	Request for Proposals
RRR	Remita Retrieval Reference
SAN	Senior Advocate of Nigeria
SCN	Supreme Court Number
ToR	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

1. In 2015, the Nigerian Bar Association (“NBA”) amended its constitution to introduce universal suffrage and electronic voting for the elections of National Officers. Based on this amendment, the 2016, 2018, and 2020 elections for national officers were conducted using electronic voting. However, all the three elections were plagued by various controversies.
2. To put an end to the controversies plaguing these past elections, the newly sworn President of the NBA, Mr. Olumide Akpata in his inaugural address delivered on the 28th of August 2020, constituted an Electoral Audit and Reform Committee (“Committee”) to be chaired by Mr. Ayodele Akintunde, SAN to carry out an audit of the 2016, 2018, and 2020 elections of National Officers and make recommendations to reform the election process. The Committee was inaugurated on the 30th of September 2020 and was ratified by the National Executive Committee (“NEC”) at its meeting held on the 15th of December 2020.
3. The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Committee include *inter alia* the audit of the elections of National Officers of the NBA in 2016, 2018, and 2020 and recommending reforms for the electoral process.
4. The Committee held its inaugural meeting on the 30th of September 2020 and thereafter called for Memoranda from the NBA members, the public and other stakeholders. The Committee formed the following sub-committees; (i) Election Technology sub-committee; (ii) Identity Management & Data Collation sub-committee; (iii) Guidelines and Code of Conduct of the Election Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association (“ECNBA”) sub-committee; (iv) Memorandum Collation, Review & Abridge sub-committee and (v) Stakeholder Liaison and Constitutional Reform sub-committee. The Committee and its sub-committees had numerous meetings towards achieving the ToR.
5. The Committee received a total of 16 (sixteen) Memoranda and had several interactive sessions with the service providers involved in the 2016, 2018, and 2020 elections as well as relevant staff of the NBA. The Committee is grateful to all those who submitted Memoranda which were very useful to the work of the Committee. The Committee is also grateful to the service providers who participated in the interactive sessions and provided useful insights into their work during the respective elections. The Memoranda Analysis and the Memoranda are appended as a schedule to this Report.
6. The Committee’s work comprised of meetings amongst its members, meetings of sub-committees, desk review of Memoranda, letters, documents and applicable laws as well as meetings and interviews with personnel of the NBA and service providers of the elections under review.

7. The Committee obtained relevant documents and reports from other service providers and consultants who were unable to attend the interactive sessions. The Committee also carried out an in-depth study of the processes and mechanisms used in conducting the three elections.
8. Given that all three elections under review were conducted using electronic voting, issues around technology-infrastructure, systems, applications, data, processes, etc., formed a major plank for the Committee's work. In order for the Committee to satisfactorily carry out its ToR, it went back in history to understand the processes and mechanisms employed in those elections.
9. The Committee's review of the NBA Constitution 2015 (as Amended) ("NBA Constitution") contains a step-by-step guide towards the conduct of the elections of National officers of the NBA. The Constitution contains a total of eleven (11) provisions in this regard and the Establishment, Appointment and Duties of the ECNBA is contained in Section 9(1) of the NBA Constitution and Paragraph 2.1 of the Second Schedule.
10. In the 2016 Election, Mr. A.B. Mahmoud SAN emerged as President. Chief J.K. Gadzama, SAN rejected the outcome and challenged the results in court. 5,452 (46.2%) members voted and 6,338 (53.8%) out of a total of 11,790 voters did not vote.
11. In the 2018 Election, Mr. Paul Usoro, SAN emerged as President. Chief Arthur Obi-Okafor, SAN and Professor Ernest Ojukwu, SAN both rejected the outcome of the elections. 12,484 (77%) of people voted and 3,631 (23%) out of the total 16,115 voters did not vote.
12. In the 2020 Election, Mr. Olumide Akpata emerged as President. 18,256 (62%) of people voted and 11,380 (38%) out of the total 29,636 voters did not vote. While Dr. Babatunde Ajibade, SAN congratulated Mr. Olumide Akpata, Mr. Dele Adesina, SAN rejected the results and called for its cancellation.
13. The Committee using the methodology stated above identified the issues that plagued the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections and classified them into three broad categories; namely: (i) Pre-election issues, (ii) Election Day issues and (iii) Post-Election issues.
14. The pre-election issues identified and discussed by the Committee in this Final Report are:
 - Delay in appointment and appearance of lack of Independence of the ECNBA;
 - Appearance of lack of transparency in the engagement of service providers;
 - Negative impact of money driven campaigns on the election's credibility;
 - Involvement of the sitting NBA President in the electoral process;
 - Non-implementation of the rotational policy as it relates to the different groups

and/or sections in a geographical zone as stated in the constitution;

- Cumbersome verification process.
- Lack of integrity and late publication of the list of eligible voters;
- Lack of integrity of the NBA voting portal;
- Involvement of the NBA Secretariat in the electoral process; and
- Poor IT knowledge of some Lawyers.

15. The election-day issues identified and fully discussed by the Committee in this Final Report are; failure to adequately and satisfactorily resolve complaints by eligible voters and inadequate monitoring of voting and collation of election results while the major post-election issue is the lack of independent post-election audit of elections.

16. The Committee has made several recommendations including constitutional reform and if these recommendations are implemented, the problems and controversies plaguing the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections of National officers will be minimized if not totally eradicated.

17. Some of the recommendations include *inter alia*:

- The appointment of the members of the ECNBA should be done by the NEC and the President of the NBA should not usurp the responsibility of the NEC;
- The ECNBA should be a standing committee with its own personnel who will be available full-time to assist the electoral process every election cycle;
- The ECNBA shall be solely responsible for the selection and engagement of all the service providers;
- A ban on all forms of financial inducements by aspirants and their supporters especially in an election year and the year preceding it; and also prohibiting the payment of BPF or Branch dues for lawyers to curry favour with voters;
- Effective enforcement of sanctions for candidates who breach campaign guidelines.
- Payment of BPF and Branch dues should be done through the new data-centric payment providers (Fintech) such as Paga, Flutterwave, Paystack and others to ensure that payment data are available as close to real time as possible, to allow for easy verification of lawyers by the NBA, without having to wait for the bank's payments reconciliations, which typically requires a 24-hour turnaround time;
- The NBA Constitution should be amended to specifically state/identify the different groups and/or sections in a geographical zone;
- Interference by the NBA Secretariat in the data handling process for and during election should be minimized as much as possible;
- The NBA ICT infrastructure should be redesigned and developed to include an end-to-end Identity management system that provides for secure Identity and Authentication mechanisms;

- There should be an efficient and effective resolution of complaints of non-receipt of the ballot by eligible voters. If need be, the voting period should be extended by the ECNBA based on the recommendation of the election platform service provider to allow for resolution of complaints and minimize disenfranchisement;
- A mandatory post-election audit exercise must be carried out by an independent body to assure the integrity, credibility, and fairness of the election process; and
- All other recommendations of the Committee are contained in this Report.

18. The executives, secretariat and members of the NBA as beacons of light must commit to a transparent, credible and fair election process. The Committee is grateful to the NBA President, Mr. Olumide Akpata and the NEC for the confidence reposed in members of the Committee to carry out this assignment. We thank the NBA for the opportunity to be of service.

1. Introduction

1.1 The President of the NBA, Mr. Olumide Akpata in his inaugural address delivered on the 28th of August, 2020 established an Electoral Audit and Reform Committee, comprising distinguished legal practitioners to audit the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections of National Officers of the NBA and recommend reforms for the NBA electoral systems and processes. The Committee was inaugurated on the 30th of September 2020 and ratified by the NEC of the NBA on the 15th of December 2020.

1.2 The composition of the Committee is as follows:

- Mr. Ayodele Akintunde, SAN, CARb. (Lagos Branch) – Chairman
- Mr. Mike Igini (Ikeja Branch) – Vice Chairman
- Mrs. Nnenna Uko, FCARB. (Enugu Branch) – Secretary
- Mr. Basil Udotai (Abuja Branch) – Member
- Mr. John Owubokiri (Port Harcourt Branch) – Member
- Mr. Ama Etuwewe, SAN (Warri Branch) – Member
- Ms. Oludayo Olorunfemi (Ikere - Ekiti Branch) – Member
- Mr. Rotimi Ogunyemi (Lagos Branch) – Member
- Mr. Mas’ud Alabalewe (Barnawa Branch) – Member
- Miss. Hadiza Nasir Ahmad (Kano Branch) – Member
- Mr. Andrew Odum (Asaba Branch) – Member
- Mrs. Altine Ibrahim (Damaturu Branch) – Member
- Mrs. Joyce Oduah, FICMC, General Secretary – Ex-Officio member

1.3 The ToR of the Committee are:

- i. To audit the elections of National Officers of the NBA of 2016, 2018 and 2020 and recommend reforms of the electoral process.
- ii. To receive Memoranda and consult far and wide across all spectrums on the experiences of the 2016, 2018 and 2020 NBA Elections in order to make recommendations that will strengthen the conduct of transparent, free, fair and credible elections of National Officers of the NBA.
- iii. To review post-election audit reports (if any) for the 2016, 2018 and 2020 election of National Officers of the NBA by the ECNBA or any other body appointed to conduct the post-election Audits.
- iv. To identify the alleged failures and irregularities of the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections of the National Officers of the NBA and make recommendations.
- v. To thoroughly study the provisions of the NBA Constitution on elections of National Officers of the NBA and Branch Officers and propose amendments as may be

deemed necessary.

- vi. To identify and assess international best practices on elections of Professional Associations similar to the NBA that will impact positively on the quality and credibility of elections of the National officers of the NBA.
 - vii. To review the efficiency of the National Secretariat in assisting the ECNBA and make recommendations to strengthen the role of the ECNBA and its independence in dealing directly with branches on data collation and management with minimal interference of the National Secretariat of the NBA.
 - viii. To work on all such areas that would improve Data Collection of Legal Practitioners and Electronic Voting to guarantee free, fair, transparent and credible elections.
 - ix. To do anything that the Committee may consider relevant or necessary in connection with the ToR; and:
 - x. To make recommendations deemed necessary for the realization of these terms of reference.
- 1.4 This Report is based on the Committee's audit of the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections of National Officers of the NBA and it addresses patterns and identifies areas/practices for change and reform. The Report embodies the narrative of the methodology employed and constraints faced by the Committee as well as the Committee's findings, analyses and recommendations. It is not designed to make allegations or accusations against any persons, organizations or administrations.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The Committee's work comprised of meetings amongst its members, meetings of sub-committees, desk review of Memoranda, letters, documents and applicable laws as well as meetings and interviews with personnel of the NBA and service providers of the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections.
- 2.2 On the 8th of October 2020, the Committee called for Memoranda from members of the NBA, the public and stakeholders. The call for Memoranda was widely published in the media, online platforms and by email. At the expiration of the deadline on the 31st of October 2020, the Committee extended the deadline for the submission of Memoranda by another two weeks and it was officially closed on the 16th of November 2020.
- 2.3 The Committee received a total of sixteen (16) Memoranda from members of the NBA, past presidential candidates, service providers, branches, and forums. The [Memoranda Analysis and the Memoranda](#) are appended as a schedule to this Report.¹

¹See Annexure for Memoranda and Memoranda Analysis

- 2.4 The Committee set up five (5) Subcommittees to carry out its work, namely:
- Election Technology Subcommittee – to assess the use of Information technology and related issues in the conduct of elections.
 - Identity Management & Data Collation Subcommittee – to proffer ways of collating a transparent and reliable data of members of the Nigerian Bar Association.
 - Guidelines and Code of Conduct of ECNBA Subcommittee – to prepare a detailed guideline for the ECNBA, the conduct of e-voting as well as provision of service providers, campaign etc.
 - Memorandum Collation, Review & abridge Subcommittee – responsible for outlining and analyzing the memoranda sent by various stakeholders; and
 - Stakeholder Liaison and Constitutional Reform Subcommittee – responsible for liaising with stakeholders including past presidential candidates and review areas of the NBA Constitution that require amendment to reform the process for election of National Officers of the NBA.
- 2.5 The Committee held eleven (11) meetings and during two of the meetings, it had interactive sessions with some of the service providers and IT Consultants involved in the 2016, 2018, and 2020 elections of National Officers of the NBA as well as the head of the ICT Department of the NBA. [A list of the persons interviewed or consulted by the Committee](#) is appended as a schedule to this Report.²
- 2.6 The Committee accorded due cognizance to the concerns highlighted by members of the NBA (especially those who participated as candidates in these past elections), views of the service providers who conducted those elections, particularly their recommendations on how best to balance the gains of the use of technology in future NBA elections of National Officers against the challenges inherent in technology acquisition and deployment, as well as the processes adopted and people engaged to conduct the elections.
- 2.7 The Committee also carried a comparative analysis of elections in lawyers’ association in Ghana, South Africa, United States of America and Canada with the extant provisions of the NBA Constitution on elections and the entirety of its electoral process. The comparative analysis showed that while professional/lawyers’ association in South Africa, United States of America and Canada had adopted electronic voting, Ghana was yet to do so.
- 2.8 The Committee obtained relevant documents and reports from other service providers and Consultants who could not be interviewed. The Committee also carried out an in-depth study of the processes and mechanisms used in conducting the 2016, 2018, and 2020

²See Annexure for persons interviewed by the Committee

elections of National Officers.

3 Constraints

- 3.1 The Committee encountered some constraints in the course of its work. First, save for the 2018 and 2020 post-election audit reports of Chams Plc. and ElectionBuddy which the Committee obtained, there was no post-election audit report for the 2016 elections of National Officers.
- 3.2 Secondly, save for the 2018 and 2020 post-election audit reports of Chams Plc and ElectionBuddy which the Committee obtained, there was no post-election audit report for the 2016 elections of National Officers.
- 3.3 Thirdly, in the course of the Committee's assignment, the head of the ICT Department of the NBA, Mr. Umar Gezawa, who had provided very useful assistance to the Committee resigned from the employment of the NBA consequently resulting in delays in the supply of relevant information required for the assignment of the Committee.
- 3.4 Despite these constraints, the information and materials generated by the Committee through the methodology stated above and a critical analysis of same is the basis upon which this Final Report has been written.

4 Background, Context and Diagnostics

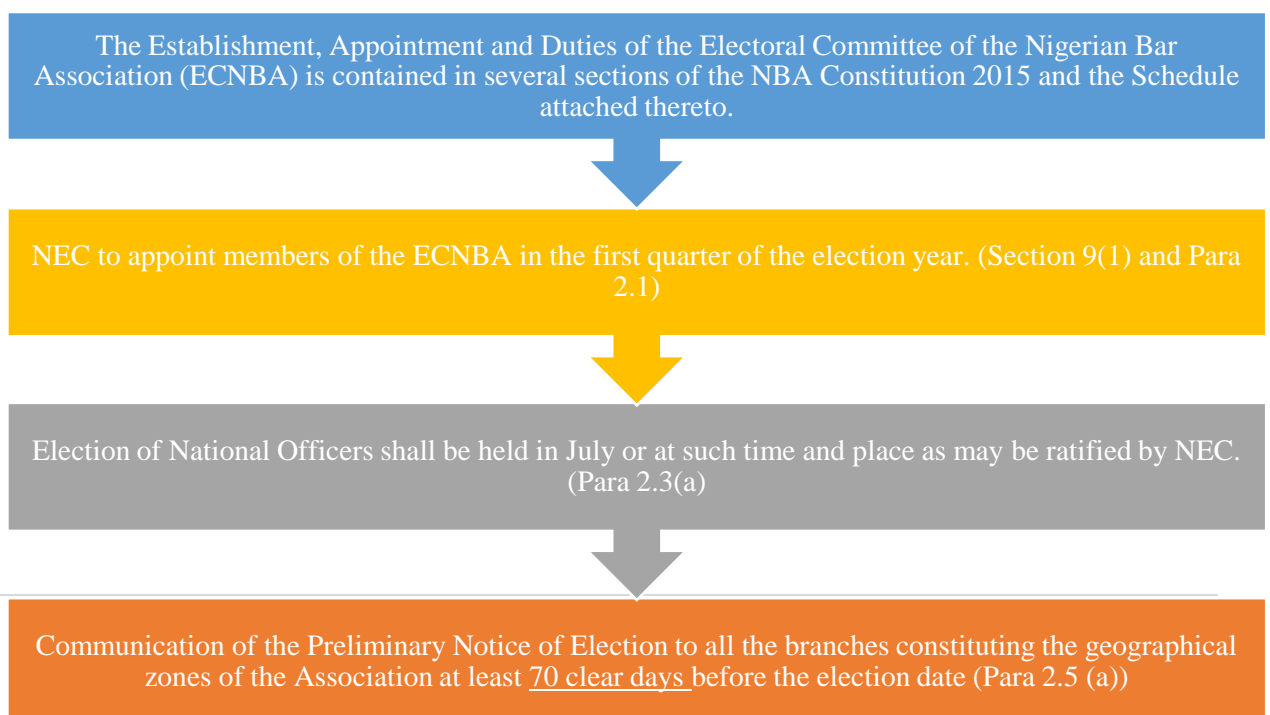
- 4.1 The NBA operated its 2009 NBA Constitution until 2015 when it was amended under the Austin Alegeh, SAN led administration. The said NBA Constitution was amended to introduce universal suffrage and for the first time, electronic voting in the election of National officers of the NBA.
- 4.2 Section 9(4) of the NBA Constitution provides that "Elections into National Offices shall be by universal suffrage and electronic voting as set out in the Second Schedule" while Paragraph 2.4 (a) and (b) of the Second Schedule provides that "Voting at the election shall be by electronic means (E-Voting) and that elections shall be conducted electronically and eligible voters shall cast their vote electronically in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the ECNBA."
- 4.3 Given that all three elections under review were conducted using electronic voting, issues around technology-infrastructure, systems, applications, data, processes, etc., formed a major plank for the Committee's review. In order for the Committee to satisfactorily carry out its ToR, the Committee went back in history to understand the processes and the mechanisms employed in all past elections of National officers of the NBA.
- 4.4 To obtain direct and first-hand knowledge in this regard, the Committee met with all service providers responsible for all previous elections, as well as officials of the ICT

Department of the NBA Secretariat.

- 4.5 In the first ever electronic elections of the NBA, that is, the 2016 Elections, [Law Pavilion](#), solely developed the election portal, and conducted the elections for the NBA. As this was the novel election that introduced electronic voting and universal suffrage in the NBA, the learning curve was steep for the service provider, as no previous templates existed to guide the process.
- 4.6 In the 2018 Elections, the ECNBA employed the services of a consultant, Finese Technologies Limited (“Finese”). The service provider, [Chams Plc.](#) (“Chams”) through a bid process was appointed to provide the election voting platform. The ECNBA also engaged Crenet TechLabs Limited (“Crenet”) to clean up the NBA’s members’ database during the process.
- 4.7 For the 2020 Elections, with the NBA having already built an in-house election platform using Tavia Technologies as developers, the ECNBA hired [INITS Limited](#) (“INITS”) to serve as its Consultant. INITS’ review of the NBA custom-built election platform showed that the election platform failed on a number of key indices as indicated in paragraph 8.6 of this report, leading to the procurement of an enterprise election platform called “ElectionBuddy” which was eventually used for the conduct of the e-voting election exercise.
- 4.8 To properly situate the context for these overviews, the Committee reviewed the relevant provisions of the NBA Constitution on the election of National Officers and Memoranda submitted. The Committee also developed a set of issues/checklists which the Committee shared with the service providers ahead of the meetings, requesting in addition to those issues, any documentation or write-up that may serve as further evidence or backup for their testimonies. The Committee received cooperation from all the service providers contacted, and relevant documents were graciously shared with the Committee.
- 4.9 The questions/issues/checklist adopted by the Committee were: (a) was there any pre-election systems analysis; (b) were efforts made at database sanitation, challenges, etc., in that regard; (c) details on the development or procurement of election platform; (d) any mock elections conducted, report/recommendations in that regard; (e) any analysis of election day process, voting statistics; (f) voter status report by election portal or enterprise platform; (g) vote by vote audit report; and (h) any post-election report/analysis/recommendations by the technology service provider or consultant?
- 4.10 The yearly reviews of the 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections below are based on the review and analysis of the Memoranda submitted, deliberations of the Committee and are organized and consistent with the itemized checklist for ease of analysis.

5 Overview of the NBA Constitution on the Election of National Officers of the NBA

- 5.1 The NBA Constitution provides for a step-by-step guide toward the conduct of the elections of National Officers of the NBA. The NBA Constitution contains a total of eleven (11) provisions in this regard. The Establishment, Appointment and Duties of the ECNBA is contained in Section 9(1) of the NBA Constitution and Paragraph 2.1 of the Second Schedule.
- 5.2 Section 8(1) of the NBA Constitution sets out the list of National Officers to be elected while section 9(4) specifies that election into National offices of the NBA shall be by universal suffrage and electronic Voting as set out in the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution.
- 5.3 Paragraph 2.2 of the Second Schedule states that for the purposes of the election of National Officers, the association shall be divided into three geographical zones, namely, Northern Zone, Eastern Zone and Western Zone. Paragraph 2.3 provides guidance on timing, candidate checklist etc. to both the ECNBA and candidates in the conduct/holding of elections and Paragraph 2.5 of the Second Schedule stipulates that a Preliminary Notice of Election shall be communicated to branches within a specified time and such notice shall contain details on offices to be filled as per zoning arrangements.
- 5.4 The grounds upon which a member shall be disqualified for election and the mode of appeal by disqualified candidates are contained in Paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 of the Second Schedule. Lastly, paragraph 2.8 of the Second Schedule stipulates the period for the announcement of election results. Below is a flow chart detailing the process for the conduct of elections of National Officers of the NBA by the ECNBA:





Candidates shall submit by email not more than four pages of A 4-size electronic copy of their Curriculum Vitae, comprehensive manifestoes and other campaign materials to the ECNBA for publication in the NBA website not later than the day fixed by the ECNBA. (Para 2.3 (e))

The ECNBA shall collate all materials, arrange them in alphabetical order without regard for the position being sought and publish them in an Election Magazine to be hosted on the NBA website at least twenty-one (21) days before the election. (Para 2.3 (h))

The ECNBA shall issue guidelines for conduct of electronic voting, which shall amongst other things provide for verification of voters, place, time and platform to be utilised for electronic voting for each particular election year taking into consideration the state of available technology and information technology infrastructure of the branches in order to afford all registered voters the opportunity to vote. (Para 2.4 (c))

Elections shall be conducted electronically and eligible voters shall cast their votes electronically in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the ECNBA. (Para 2.4 (b))

The results of elections should be announced within twenty four (24) hours of the conduct of elections upon collation and verification of votes (Para 2.8)

6 Overview of NBA 2016 Elections of National Officers

- 6.1 The first election of National Officers of the NBA by electronic voting was in 2016. The office of the President was zoned to the Northern Zone and was contested for by Chief J.K. Gadzama, SAN and Mr. A.B. Mahmoud, SAN. The ECNBA comprised of Mr. Ken Mozia, SAN as the Chairman; while Mr. Oluwaseun Ajoba, Hajiya Safiya Balarabe, Mrs. Amaka Ezeno, and Mrs. Eucheria Pepple were members.
- 6.2 The Service Provider was Law Pavilion. Law Pavilion as the developer of the platform for the novel NBA elections by electronic voting started from ground zero and had to build the process from the ground up. There were no pre-existing systems for any analysis to be carried out.
- 6.3 The database or the “verified database” of lawyers was virtually non-existent in the form that any technology application could be used to capture its content. They were all in hard copies. The developer picked up filled out forms in bags; painstakingly migrated them to the Microsoft Excel program and then uploaded them into a database. Even though this was the maiden election, “the fact that most of the lawyers’ information were still in filled out forms

in ‘ghana-must-go’ bags, was very telling.”³ It was a learning curve for Law Pavilion, having to develop the maiden online platform for the NBA.

- 6.4 No Mock Elections were conducted. An analysis of Election Day Processes/Voting Statistics Report was submitted in the final report by Law Pavilion. A Voters Status Report by the Election Portal or Enterprise Platform was submitted after the election as part of the result and certification. There was no vote-by-vote Audit conducted on the portal.
- 6.5 Mr. A.B. Mahmoud SAN emerged as President. 5,452 members voted at the 2016 Election of National Officers of the NBA out of a total of 11,790. See Table below.

Category	Count
Total number of eligible members with confirmed updated contact details.	11,790
Total number of members that completed accreditation.	6,932
Total number of eligible voters who voted.	5,452

- 6.6 Chief J.K. Gadzama, SAN rejected the election outcome and challenged the results in court. He alleged fraud, bias, the unreliability of the electronic system of voting and non-compliance with the NBA Constitution and Electoral Guidelines.
- 6.7 Law Pavilion submitted a [Memorandum to the Committee](#)⁴ and the Managing Director of Law Pavilion, Mr. Ope Olugasa attended two interactive sessions organized by the Committee on the 10th and 21st of December, 2020 where he provided very useful insight into the services provided by Law Pavilion in the 2016 Elections and the challenges encountered.
- 6.8 Law Pavilion identified loopholes/issues of the 2016 Elections from two perspectives; (i) Pre-election issues; (ii) Post-elections issues and their effects and implications. The pre-election loopholes/issues identified were: a) complexity and lack of transparency in the compilation of the voters’ list; b) difficulty in getting an accurate list of those that had paid their BPF and Branch dues; c) absence of accurate details (emails and telephone numbers) of members on the voters’ list; and; d) general Non-IT Savviness of some lawyers.

³Memorandum submitted by Law Pavilion dated 12th November, 2020
⁴Memorandum submitted by Law Pavilion dated 12th November, 2020

- 6.9 The implications of these pre-election issues according to Law Pavilion were that, they created windows to either add voters to the list or exclude voters, or allow details swapping of voters and provided a platform for proxy voting. There was suspicion of every move of the ECNBA including the honest mistakes made by it and Law Pavilion. Also, candidates took advantage of these pre-election issues in the guise of helping members to vote.
- 6.10 Law Pavilion identified post-election loopholes/issues of the 2016 NBA Elections such as; inadequate transparency in the e-voting results and the non-availability of a post-election audit procedure to ensure an efficient and credible post-election audit. The effects of these pre-election loopholes/issues were that they appeared to create reasons for losing candidates to cry foul even in the most credible election. It also led to a complete mistrust and lack of confidence in the electoral process.
- 6.11 According to Law Pavilion,⁵ the most critical issues that the ECNBA needs to address are timing of the compilation and publication of the voters' list which should be no later than two weeks before the election and conducting a post-election audit exercise and publishing the outcome immediately after the election.
- 6.12 The Committee reviewed all Memoranda submitted in respect of the 2016 Elections of National Officers of the NBA and deliberated on the issues identified. It also considered the response of the service provider at the interactive sessions. The Committee found *inter alia* that the following loopholes and issues resulted in the controversies that plagued the 2016 NBA Elections of National Officers, namely:
- a. Complexity and lack of transparency in the compilation of the voters' list;
 - b. Difficulty in getting an accurate list of those that paid their BPF and Branch dues;
 - c. Absence of accurate details (emails and telephone numbers) of members on the voters' list;
 - d. Inconsistencies in the names of members; mostly due to name changes by female lawyers following marriages, which names were not reflected on the voters' list;
 - e. General Non-IT Savviness of some lawyers;
 - f. Negative impact of money driven campaigns on the credibility of the NBA elections;
 - g. Inadequate transparency in the e-voting results; and
 - h. The non-availability of a post-election audit procedure to ensure an efficient and credible post-election audit.

7 Overview of NBA 2018 Elections of National Officers

- 7.1 The second election of National Officers of the NBA by electronic voting was in 2018.

⁵Mr. Ope Olugasa.

Nigerian lawyers were optimistic that the 2018 Elections would address the challenges encountered in the 2016 Elections of National officers of the NBA. Like the previous election, the 2018 Elections turned out to be controversial.

- 7.2 The office of the President of the NBA was zoned to the Eastern Zone. The contest for the Presidency was between Mr. Paul Usoro, SAN, Chief Arthur Obi-Okafor, SAN and Professor Ernest Ojukwu, SAN. The Chairman of the ECNBA was Professor Auwalu Yadudu while Teslim Olatunde Busari, SAN, Gloria A. Anuri, Professor Augustine Agom and Bolaji Agoro were members.
- 7.3 The Service Providers were Crenet and Chams. The ECNBA also had an Election Technical Consultant, Finese. In 2018, there was still no election technology infrastructure from the 2016 Elections for the ECNBA to leverage on.
- 7.4 Chams brought in its proprietary election platform “VOTA” electronic voting solution and deployed it for the elections. Chams was responsible for the following election activities: providing and configuring the voting portal for use; sending notification via email and SMS to voters; providing an online real-time dashboard and leaderboard for monitoring during the election and providing support help desk during the election. Chams conducted a Demo and Mock Election for the ECNBA and Stakeholders.
- 7.5 Crenet on the other hand was responsible for the pre-election activity in respect of generating, validating and submitting an eligible voters’ list required for the elections. The Election Technical Consultant Finese, was responsible for observing the generation of the election results by Chams as well as analyzing the log files generated which included voting logs, user activity logs amongst others.
- 7.6 The pre-election issues in the 2018 Elections of National Officers of the NBA included such issues like the underlisted:
 - i. The verification exercise appeared to be cumbersome.
 - ii. There were trust issues with the service provider (Chams) owing to allegations of conflict of interest.
 - iii. There was no existing election technology infrastructure from the 2016 Elections for the ECNBA to leverage on as regards the portal. Chams brought in its proprietary election platform and deployed it for the Elections.
 - iv. Complaints about the collation of the names of the eligible voters in the NBA, the Supreme Court Numbers (SCN), the telephone numbers and the email addresses of members of the NBA from their respective branches which were forwarded to the National Secretariat of the NBA by the Branch Chairmen and Branch Secretaries.
 - v. Inconsistencies in the names of members; mostly due to name changes by female lawyers following marriages, which names were not reflected on the

database.

- vi. The database of members was in Microsoft Excel format and members were required to submit forms with their data thereby increasing the rate of human intervention leading to error.
- vii. Complaints bordering on harvesting of email addresses and telephone numbers through changes in the legitimate email addresses and telephone numbers that were sent from the branches to the National Secretariat of the NBA.
- viii. There was failure to address the complaints of members satisfactorily or at all.
- ix. Members of the NBA alleged that their email addresses and telephone numbers were compromised hence they could not receive their voting links. They neither received any link during the period of the elections neither were they able to vote.
- x. 1004/1005 members' email addresses were compromised with domain of **airmail.cc, firemail.cc and openmailbox.org** email addresses on a branch-by-branch basis.
- xi. The 1004/1005 members did not vote during the 2018 Elections of National Officers of the NBA.⁶
- xii. Negative impact of money driven campaigns on the credibility of the NBA elections;
- xiii. Non-implementation of the rotational policy as it relates to the different groups and/or sections in a geographical zone as stated in the constitution.

7.7 [Chams' report](#)⁷ made the following observations as regards the pre-election process: i) that Crenet was employed for the pre-election process which included data cleaning, updates and verification of eligible voters; ii) The database of eligible voters was sent electronically to Crenet to handle the data cleaning and make sure that the data was properly put in a form that could be uploaded to the election platform – "VOTA"; iii) Crenet, upon conclusion of the cleaning and formatting of the database, forwarded same to the Secretary of the NBA/ECNBA who completed the transmission process by sending the data to Chams.

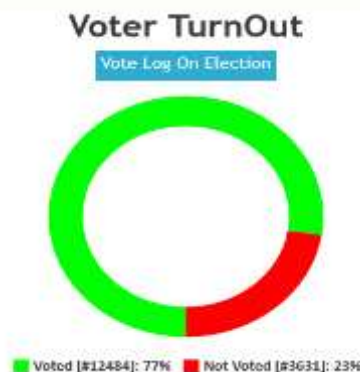
7.8 Due to the delay in obtaining the voters' list, Chams' audit team could not verify the voters' list given to it by Crenet through the ECNBA. According to Chams, the ECNBA requested that the Chams Audit/Voters' list verification exercise be shelved because they were under pressure to commence the voting process at 12:00 noon on Saturday, 18th of August, 2018. Chams further stated that ECNBA issued it a letter indemnifying it of any responsibility that may arise as a result of shelving the audit of the voters' list.

7.9 As a result of the foregoing which would have highlighted data issues, the initial attempt to

⁶Memorandum submitted by Adeola Olarotimi Lema
⁷Chams Plc report on the NBA 2018 general elections

upload the voters' list partially failed with the details of only 2000 out of 14215 voters being uploaded. All data were eventually uploaded. During the data upload exercise, there were three categories of data issues which delayed the upload; a) presence of special characters, b) data format and c) wrong data (wrong phone numbers and emails). It was after all the above-mentioned data problems were resolved that 14215 records were successfully uploaded into the system and the elections started at 6:45 pm on Saturday, 18th of August, 2018.

- 7.10 During the data upload process, Chams observed that a set of eligible voters on the list (5 people) shared the same phone lines and the phone line was a landline. The ECNBA resolved that if the people could not get phone alerts, they would receive email notifications. Some email addresses were found to have **firemail.cc; openmail.cc and airmail.cc**. Chams stated that it discussed this issue with Crenet, the NBA software auditor and it was presented to the ECNBA. Chams stated that the ECNBA resolved that voting should continue and that the affected voters should not be removed from the list to prevent agitations of tampering with the voters' list; to protect the integrity of the election process; and in order not to disenfranchise the voters.
- 7.11 The [Chams' reports](#) also indicated that it received an additional database of 1900 voters from the secretary of the NBA/ECNBA after election had opened. The additional data was said to accommodate eligible voters whose names were not on the first voters' list. Chams stated that its team highlighted to ECNBA the audit implications of the inclusion of this second voters' list to the already on-going voting process should a third party call for the audit log of the activities on the system. Chams stated that it obtained a letter of undertaking exonerating it from responsibility and it uploaded the additional 1900 voters taking the total voter count to 16115.⁸
- 7.12 There was an issue from Chams email service provider causing delay in email delivery to voters. The matter was resolved on Sunday, 19th of August, 2018 and the email service delivery improved significantly.
- 7.13 Mr. Paul Usoro, SAN emerged as President in the 2018 Elections of National Officers of the NBA. Chief Arthur Obi-Okafor, SAN and Professor Ernest Ojukwu, SAN both rejected the outcome of the elections. The statistics revealed that 12,484, that is, 77% of people voted and 3,631, that is, 23% out of the total 16,115 voters did not vote.



⁸Chams Plc report on the NBA 2018 general elections

33 Contestants spread across 14 positions.⁹

Voting Statistics

Number of eligible voters:	
The total number of eligible voters	16,115
The total number of members that voted (%)	12,484 (77%)
The total number of members that did not vote (%)	3,631 (23%)
Closing Day Vote	760
First Batch of Voters List upload	14,215
Second Batch of Voters List upload	1,900
Voting commencement date	18 th August 2018 at 6:45pm
Voting Closing date	20 th August 2018 at 6:00am
Eligible Voters Login ID	Membership Number
Login Password	System Generated

- 7.14 The leader of the technical team of the Obi-Okafor campaign group, late Mr. Olumuyiwa Olowokure sent a petition to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (“EFCC”), alleging cyber-crime after [investigating](#) the process with his team.¹⁰ The EFCC is currently prosecuting two staff members of the NBA who are accused of manipulating the 2018 Elections to favour a particular candidate thereby contravening the Cybercrime (Prohibition Prevention, etc.) Act 2015. The matter is *subjudice*.
- 7.15 The Committee reviewed all the Memoranda on the 2018 Elections of National Officers of the NBA, deliberated on the issues identified and considered the responses of service providers involved in the 2018 Elections; namely: Akin Akinwolere of Finese and Mr. Kehinde Olateru of Crenet at the interactive sessions that the Committee had with them and it was apparent that the issues highlighted above aided the controversies that plagued the 2018 Elections.

⁹Chams Plc report on the NBA 2018 general elections

¹⁰Memorandum submitted by Adebola Olarotimi Lema

- 7.16 One of the major challenges observed by ECNBA’s Consultant, Finese was that the database of members was captured in Microsoft Excel format and lawyers were required to submit forms with their data, which were then transcribed into Excel, thereby increasing the rate of human error and possible manipulation. It was also observed that branches were conducting verification for their members, which led to about 200 lawyers in one branch having the same phone numbers, making verification of at least 199 members impossible, as the first member to be verified with the said phone number effectively blocked out the others. The Consultant reported that verification was the biggest challenge for the ECNBA during that election.
- 7.17 There was an analysis of Election Day Processes and a Voting Statistics Report. The Voters Status Reports was prepared by Chams but there was no Vote-by-Vote Audit Report. The Post-Election Report/Analysis/Recommendations by the Consultant recommended that:
- Activities leading to the elections should start on-time.
 - In addition to the role of a Technical Consultant, an experienced and certified project manager should be engaged by the ECNBA to manage the election process from start to finish.
 - There should be a minimum of 48 hours between the Pre-Election and Election stages to allow for data auditing to identify and resolve any data anomalies.
 - The NBA needs an expert system to automate and facilitate workflows and communications from members to state branches and from branches to the National Secretariat. Such a system will include a robust membership and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).

8 Overview of NBA 2020 Elections of National Officers

- 8.1 The third election of National Officers of the NBA by electronic voting was in 2020. The office of the President was zoned to the Western Zone and was contested by Mr. Dele Adesina, SAN, Dr. Babatunde Ajibade SAN and Mr. Olumide Akpata. The ECNBA comprised of Mr. Tawo Tawo, SAN as the Chairman while Abdullahi Haruna, SAN, Professor Augustine Agom, Mr. Alozie Echeonwu and Mrs. Cordelia U. Eke were members. The Service Providers were Tavia Technologies (“Tavia”) as primary election platform provider and ElectionBuddy as secondary election platform provider. INITS was the technical consultant.
- 8.2 Nigerian lawyers were again optimistic that the 2020 Elections would be seamless as all the challenges encountered in the 2016 and 2018 Elections would have been fully addressed. However, that was not the case, like the previous elections, the 2020 Elections was controversial and there were pre-election and post-election issues and challenges.
- 8.3 The pre-election issues included agitations in some quarters about the interpretation of

paragraph 2.2 (d) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution which provides that where a position is zoned to any particular geographical zone, the position shall be rotated and held in turn by the different groups and/or sections in the [geographical zone](#)¹¹.

- 8.4 There were also controversies about the [money driven campaigns](#) especially for the offices of President and General Secretary. Aspirants travelled to many of the over 125 branches of the NBA making donations to branch law weeks, branch projects and became emergency philanthropists to curry favour from voters. There were also allegations and counter allegations of direct cash inducements being demanded and given to voters by aspirants to elicit their votes.¹²
- 8.5 Tavia was the company involved in the re-vamping of the NBA website. Part of the process involved building an election portal for the NBA. To provide technical assistance to the Committee in the deployment of the electronic voting system, the ECNBA put out a Request for Proposal (“RFP”) for technical consultants. Eleven firms responded by submitting proposals. INITS was selected and served as the Technical Consultant to the ECNBA.
- 8.6 INITS carried out a system analysis on the NBA purpose-built portal developed by Tavia and recommended that the NBA portal was not fit for purpose and could not be utilized for the 2020 Elections of National Officers of the NBA.
- 8.7 In the 2020 Elections, verification was moved online. The first challenge was mobilizing members to go online and verify/update their information on the NBA website. A series of messages were sent out to lawyers to encourage early and efficient data verification and information update on the portal. The second challenge was the lack of a unique identifier with which to match the information in the verified database of the NBA with the names/details of members that were eligible to vote, that is, those that paid their BPF and Branch dues.
- 8.8 Several inconsistencies were observed in the names of members; mostly due to name changes by female lawyers following marriages, which names were not reflected on the database but appeared on the voters’ list, given that they had paid their BPF and branch dues. There were also challenges associated with the use of initials in payment of BPF and branch dues, instead of full names consistent with the name format in the verified database of the NBA.
- 8.9 Mr. Olumide Akpata (then a Presidential Candidate) raised an alarm about the possibility of electoral fraud. In two separate letters, which he (Olumide Akpata) addressed to the Chairman of the ECNBA, he questioned the verification process and hired an independent digital forensic team to test the integrity of the NBA portal. The Forensic Audit Report by the independent team indicated that the portal was insecure and he published same in

¹¹Memorandum submitted by RA Lawal Rabana SAN dated 13th November, 2020

¹²Memorandum submitted by Babatunde Ajibade, SAN dated 2nd November, 2020

national dailies.¹³ Mr. Dele Adesina, SAN and Dr. Babatunde Ajibade, SAN also expressed their reservations about the process.

8.10 The ECNBA also failed to publish the final list of eligible voters within the period specified in the NBA Constitution. While the ECNBA managed to eliminate “Opening Balance”, in its first voters’ list, it included “Diaspora International” into the voters’ list. Also, some lawyers who had been verified could not find their names on the final voters’ list.

8.11 Due to the weakness and challenges of the NBA portal built by Tavia, the ECNBA opted to use an independent enterprise election voting platform for the conduct of the 2020 Elections of National Officers by electronic voting. ElectionBuddy and Election Runner were the enterprise platforms considered; however, ElectionBuddy was selected after satisfying the penetration/security test which focused on the following areas:

- a. Usability;
- b. Security;
- c. Performance;
- d. Terms & Service Level Agreement; and
- e. Support.

8.12 The [Results of the 2020 Elections of National Officers of the NBA were as follows](#)¹⁴:

President

Julius Oladele Adesina, SAN	3982 votes (21.9%)
Dr. Babatunde Ajibade, SAN, FCIARB	4328 votes (23.8%)

Olumide Akpata 9892 votes (54.3%)

Olumide Akpata won with 54.3% of the vote.

18202 votes tallied and 54 abstentions from 18256 ballots

8.13 The overall election result statistics were as follows:

Total Eligible Voters	29,636
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¹³<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/07/firm-faults-nba-electoral-committee-portal/>

¹⁴ NBA 2020 Elections Post-Election Report by INITS

Ballots Submitted	18,256
Voter Turnout (Based on Ballots Submitted)	62%
Eligible Voters who did not vote	11,380
Ballots Opened but Not Cast ¹⁵	205

Category	Description	Count
Total Voters	Total number of eligible voters uploaded to the election portal	29,636
Voters with Emails	Total number of eligible voters who had email addresses.	28,525
Voters with Phone Numbers	Total number of eligible voters with telephone numbers for SMS notices.	27,491
Voters Who Voted	Total number of eligible voters who voted	18,256
Voters Who Did Not Vote	Total number of eligible voters who did not vote	11,380

8.14 [INITS' report](#) revealed that during the elections on the ElectionBuddy platform, there were two major challenges. The first challenge was that based on the traffic and requests for the results between the first and second hour of the elections, voters and viewers began experiencing service degradation. After casting votes, a link was provided to voters to view the interim results while the elections were ongoing. Via this link, the results were displayed and were being tallied in real-time. The link to the results found its way to social media and thousands of people began to request and view the results. To protect the voting experience, a decision was taken to stop displaying the results directly and in real-time on the ElectionBuddy platform and to instead take periodic snapshots of the results page and publish it on <https://go.nigerianbar.org.ng>. Voters and viewers alike were then redirected to this new page to view the results and the voting experience returned immediately to the right levels. The second challenge was the notice deliverability levels and this is captured in the schedule on Notice

¹⁵When a voter opens the personalized secure link, completes the authorization process successfully by providing the SCN tied to the secure link but did not cast their ballot for whatever reason.

Delivery/Voter Statistics below.

8.15 The INITs chart below represents the final statistics on notices sent out to voters regarding the elections, directly by Electionbuddy.

NOTICE DELIVERY/VOTER STATISTICS		
Notices Sent and Polls Opened	<p>The total number of election poll links that were opened as notices were sent.</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 28,525 (emails) + 27,491 (SMS) were attempted. - Eligible voters had both email and telephone numbers for SMS in most cases. <p>This shows the summation of notices received by both SMS' and emails that were open.</p> <p>These were sent to all valid emails and telephone numbers in the list</p>	46,412
Polls Opened Notices Delivered	<p>The total number of election polls opening notices delivered after being sent by the election portal via mail and/or SMS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These were sent to all valid emails and telephone numbers in the list - These notifications were not blocked or bounced by service providers or inactivity. See "major causes of undeliverable notices" below. 	31,170
Reminders Dispatched (SMS + Email)	<p>Total number of reminders dispatched either by mail or telephone number at different intervals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reminders were sent at different intervals during the election - At least three reminders were sent <p>Reminders were sent only to those that had not voted already and those with valid contact details.</p>	102,440
Voters with One or More	Total number of notices (SMS and emails) that	15,242

Undeliverable Notices	<p>were undeliverable i.e.</p> <p>Either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email was not deliverable - SMS was not deliverable - Both email and SMS were not deliverable. <p>This was indicated in red on the election portal.</p> <p>See “major causes of undeliverable notices” below.</p>	
Voters with One Undeliverable Notice and Still Voted or Opened the Ballot	<p>Total number of voters who had one notice undeliverable and still voted or opened the ballot. i.e.:</p> <p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SMS notice was undeliverable OR - The email notice was undeliverable but the voter still voted or opened the ballot. <p>This means that one of the two notices was delivered.</p> <p>See “major causes of undeliverable notices” below.</p>	8,114
Voters with One Undeliverable Notice and Still Voted	<p>Total number of voters who had one notice undeliverable but still got to vote. i.e.:</p> <p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SMS notice was undeliverable OR - The email notice was undeliverable but the voter still voted. <p>This means that one of the two notices was delivered as this is the only means of gaining access to vote.</p> <p>See “major causes of undeliverable notices” below.</p>	7,909
Voters with One Undeliverable Notice and Opened the Ballot	<p>Voters with one undeliverable notice but opened the ballot and did not vote.</p> <p>It is assumed the other notice was delivered as the ballot was opened.</p>	205
Bounced/Undeliverable Email Addresses and Did Not Vote	<p>The number of undeliverable email notices and did not vote.</p> <p>It is assumed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The voter received the SMS notice and still did not vote OR - The voter did not receive the SMS notice as well. 	7,174

	See “major causes of undeliverable notices” below.	
Bounced/Undeliverable Email Addresses and Voted from SMS Link	The number of voters whose email notifications were undeliverable and voted via the SMS notification link.	7,902
Bounced/Undeliverable Phone Numbers and Did Not Vote	Number of undeliverable SMS notifications and did not vote. See “major causes of undeliverable notices” below.	6,974
Bounced/Undeliverable Phone Numbers and Voted from Email Link	The number of voters with undeliverable/bounced SMS’s and voted via the email link. See “major causes of undeliverable notices” below.	7,909

8.16 The major causes of undeliverable notices as per INITs report were:

- Voter has an inactive phone number;
- Voter has invalid phone number (does not exist or is too short or too long);
- Voter has invalid email address (wrongly spelt and does not exist OR their domain has expired);
- Spam filter or email wall on voter's email blocking direct delivery of emails;
- Do Not Disturb (“DND”) is active on Voter’s phone and the message has been blocked by the telecommunication company.
- Spam status issued from repeated attempts to deliver to lines with DND status.
- Based on the indicators in the Notice Deliverability report, there was a clear data problem with the contact data stored, the data capture and validation process of the contact information.
- There were 205 opened ballots that were not eventually cast, which could either be that they lost interest, were only curious as to the process, tried to cast their ballot after the window for voting had closed or did not complete the ballot confirmation process on the preview page.

8.17 A Voter Status Report obtained from ElectionBuddy was made available to the Committee and it contains the following details¹⁶:

- i. Voter;
- ii. Ballot Open Time;
- iii. Ballot Submission Time;
- iv. IP Address;
- v. Voting Status (Voted or Otherwise);
- vi. Number of Reminders Sent; and

¹⁶ NBA 2020 Voter Status Report by Election Buddy

vii. Undeliverable Status/History.

8.18 INITS' report indicated that ElectionBuddy, certified that:

- a. Only voters on the voter list voted.
- b. Each voter only voted once, based on their unique access key.
- c. Any ballots which were not completed were not included in the results.
- d. A unique hash was available to each voter upon successful submission of their ballot to ensure that their vote was included in the results, and to ensure that the voter's ballot submission was not tampered with or otherwise changed.

8.19 The INITS' report did not include a Vote-by-Vote Audit Report. The Committee requested for the Report but was not able to obtain it before the submission of this Final Report. It will contain the following details:

- a. Voter;
- b. Ballot Open Time;
- c. Ballot Submission Time;
- d. IP Address;
- e. Position; and
- f. Selected Candidate /Abstention.

The challenges highlighted above are continuous occurrences which have plagued the electoral processes and if not resolved, will persist.

8.20 While Dr. Babatunde Ajibade, SAN congratulated Mr. Olumide Akpata, Mr. Dele Adesina, SAN rejected the results and called for its cancellation.

9. **ELECTION ISSUES/CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMITTEE**

9.1 The Committee using the methodology stated above identified the issues that have plagued the 2016, 2018 and 2020 Elections of National Officers of the NBA and classified them into three broad categories; namely: (i) Pre-election issues, (ii) Election Day issues and (iii) Post-Election issues.

9.2 The pre-election issues identified by the Committee are:

- Delay in appointment and appearance of lack of independence of the ECNBA;
- Appearance of lack of transparency in the engagement of service providers;
- Negative impact of money driven campaigns on the credibility of the NBA elections;

- Involvement of the sitting NBA president in the electoral process;
- NBA rotational policy as it relates to the different groups and/or sections in a geographical zone as stated in the constitution;
- Lack of integrity and late publication of the list of eligible voters;
- Lack of integrity of the NBA voting portal;
- Involvement of the NBA Secretariat in the electoral process; and
- Poor IT knowledge of some lawyers.

9.3 The election day issues are:

- Failure to adequately and satisfactorily resolve complaints by eligible voters; and
- Inadequate monitoring of voting and collation of election results.

9.4 The major post-election issue is:

- Lack of independent post-election audit of elections.

Pre-Election Issues/Challenges Identified by the Committee and Recommendations

10. **Delay in Appointment and appearance of lack of Independence of the ECNBA:** The success and credibility of the elections of National officers of the NBA rests on the shoulders of the ECNBA, which is constitutionally empowered to conduct the elections from start to finish. The integrity and independence of the members of the ECNBA is critical to the smooth conduct of the elections. The appointment of the members of the ECNBA is solely the responsibility of NEC¹⁷ and this is required to be done in the first quarter of the election year.¹⁸

10.1 Paragraph 2.1 (c) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution provides that NEC shall be responsible for the appointment of the members of the [ECNBA](#).¹⁹

10.2 The involvement of sitting presidents in the appointment process gives an appearance of lack of independence of the ECNBA. For instance, there has been a pattern of appointing the Chairmen of the ECNBA from the same geographical zone as the sitting president.

10.3 In 2016, Mr. Ken Mozia, SAN, who is from the same zone with the then sitting President, Mr. Augustine Alegeh, SAN was the ECNBA Chairman. In 2018, Professor Auwalu Yadudu from the same zone with the then NBA President, Mr. A.B. Mahmoud, SAN was the ECNBA Chairman. In 2020, Mr. Tawo Tawo, SAN from the [same zone with the then NBA President](#), Mr. Paul Usoro, SAN was the ECNBA Chairman.²⁰

10.4 Even though the NBA Constitution vests the responsibility of conducting the elections of

¹⁷Paragraph 2.1 (c) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution 2015

¹⁸Section 9 of the NBA Constitution 2015

¹⁹Memorandum submitted by Stephen Obajaja

²⁰Memorandum submitted by Joe Kyari Gadzama, SAN

National Officers of the NBA in the ECNBA,²¹ there is still a significant involvement of the NBA Secretariat in the electoral process as the NBA continues to be involved in directing essential aspects of the election value chain and since the NBA Secretariat is manned by staff, partisanship cannot be eradicated.

- 10.5 Furthermore, the appointment of the ECNBA is usually not done early and this has resulted in some common problems that have been associated with the past elections of National Officers with the ECNBA having little or no time at all to adhere to the electoral time table as provided in the NBA Constitution and thereby breaching the constitutional provisions governing the electoral process.

Recommendations

- 10.6 The Committee recommends as follows:

- 10.6.1 The appointment of the members of the ECNBA should be the responsibility of the NEC. NEC should setup a subcommittee or design its own mechanism to nominate members of the ECNBA to be approved by the general body (NEC). The provisions of the NBA Constitution giving NEC the responsibility to appoint members of ECNBA should be strictly adhered to. It is suggested that the ECNBA should be a standing committee with its own personnel who will be available full-time to continually assist in improving the electoral process.
- 10.6.2 The NBA Constitution should be amended to expressly show laid down procedures on how the appointment of the members of the ECNBA should be done in order to prevent any usurpation or perceived usurpation of that power by a sitting president of the NBA.
- 10.6.3 There should be a Code of Conduct, Operational Manuals, Guidelines etc. for the ECNBA detailing how members of the ECNBA are expected to conduct themselves and effectively carry out their duties. [A draft Code of Conduct for members of the ECNBA is appended as an annexure to this Report.](#)²²
- 10.6.4 The ECNBA should be promptly setup. This appointment should be preferably done in the first month (January) of the election year so that the ECBNA can commence its work well before the end of payment of BPF and Branch dues. (i.e., 31st March)
- 10.6.5 Once voting commences, the ECNBA should not be allowed to upload additional list of voters to the election voting platform.
- 10.6.6 The ECNBA should have its Web environment/portal integrated into the

²¹ Paragraph 2.1 (b) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution 2015

²² See annexure of draft Code of Conduct of the ECNBA

existing integrated into the existing NBA Platform with linkages to enterprise third party election platform.

10.6.7 The NBA Constitution should be amended where necessary to enable the ECNBA carry out its responsibilities better.

10.6.8 The ECNBA should be properly funded by submitting a detailed budget at the beginning of its assignment for its activities.

11 Appearance of lack of transparency in the engagement of Service Providers: An area of concern identified by the Committee is the appearance of lack of transparency in the process of choosing and engaging the service providers.

Recommendations

11.1 The Committee recommends as follows:

11.1.1 The following service providers must be engaged by the ECNBA for a fair, transparent and credible electoral process:

11.1.1.1 An experienced certified Project Manager who should be present to manage the election from start to finish.²³

11.1.1.2 A competent company responsible for reviewing and validating the voters' register generated and submitted by the NBA technology infrastructure platform

11.1.1.3 A competent company responsible for the election activities which include providing and configuring the voting portal for use; sending notifications via email and SMS to voters; providing online real-time dashboard and leaderboard for monitoring during the election; and providing a support help desk during the election.

11.1.1.4 A Technical Consultant appointed by the ECNBA who will be responsible for post-election activities.

11.1.1.5 An independent audit company who will carry out a post-election audit exercise.

11.1.2 The ECNBA should be solely responsible for the selection, appointment and engagement of all the service providers and should constantly engage with stakeholders, candidates and their supporters assuring them of a transparent

²³Chams Report on the NBA 2018 Election

electoral process.

- 11.1.3 The process of selecting the service providers should be by RFP. Due diligence must be properly conducted before the engagement/appointment of service providers and mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that only qualified, experienced, skilled and competent companies with no conflict of interest are engaged.
- 11.1.4 The list of shortlisted service providers and the respective services they provide shall be published to afford the public the opportunity to object or file any complaints against the engagement of such service provider. The decision of the ECNBA in respect of the choice of service provider shall be final.
- 11.1.5 The contract of engagement for service providers shall clearly stipulate that the service provider shall be accountable to the ECNBA and not the NBA President and Secretariat.
- 11.1.6 The service providers appointed by the ECNBA should ensure that test emails are sent to all eligible voters at least two (2) weeks before the election date to allow enough time to entertain and resolve complaints of non-receipt of the test ballots.
- 11.1.7 The voting platform to be provided by the enterprise service provider must undergo a security/penetration test to ensure it is not vulnerable and cannot be attacked in anyway. The tests shall include:
- i. Usability;
 - ii. Security;
 - iii. Performance;
 - iv. Terms & Service Legal Agreement; and
 - v. Support (before, during and after).
- 11.1.8 Each service providers shall submit a report of its activities to the ECNBA after the completion of its work. Such report shall be made available to candidates on request and shall be properly stored for institutional memory.

12 **Negative Impact of Money Driven Campaigns on the Credibility of NBA Elections:** Paragraph 2.3 (f) of the Second Schedule to the NBA Constitution sets out the mode of campaign for candidates of the election of National Officers by stating that candidates shall submit amongst other things their campaign materials to the ECNBA for publication in the NBA website. Paragraph 2.3 (h) of the Second Schedule requires the ECNBA to collate all materials and publish them in an electronic election magazine to be hosted on the NBA website.

- 12.1 Paragraph 2.3 (g) of the Second Schedule prohibits the distribution of any form of souvenir whatsoever by a candidate or his supporter(s) and prescribes that the violation of the rule attracts disqualification of such a candidate.
- 12.2 Two major pre-election issues/challenges are the modes of campaigns and the influence of money in various manners to curry the votes of eligible voters. High financial demands are placed on candidates contesting for National offices of the NBA especially the offices of the President and General Secretary. Candidates desirous of running for NBA national offices have more often than not become emergency philanthropists and are required to travel to NBA Branches and make contributions towards branch events and projects and these travels/visits have been made essential so as to get more votes.
- 12.3 The existence of unequal opportunities for campaign is another issue. More affluent candidates are able to visit law offices, branches and travel thus negating the regulation of campaigns to create a level playing field and not confer undue advantage on any candidate as stipulated in the NBA Constitution.

Recommendations:

- 12.4 The Committee recommends that the ECNBA Campaign Guidelines must contain the following:
- 12.4.1 A ban on vote buying through any form of donations and philanthropist gestures by candidates seeking election into any national office during the election year and/or the year preceding it.
 - 12.4.2 A prohibition on NBA Branches, Fora, Sections etc. from soliciting contributions/donations/sponsorship from candidates seeking election into any national office during the election year and/or the year preceding it.
 - 12.4.3 A ban on all forms of financial inducements including paying BPF or branch dues for lawyers to curry favour from voters by candidates and/or their supporters especially in the election year and/or the year preceding it.
 - 12.4.4 Automatic disqualification for any candidate who flouts any of the above.
- 12.5 The ECNBA should have and run its own independent website/online platform. Manifestos of candidates should be uploaded on the ECNBA's website/online platform so that same should be disseminated to eligible voters by the ECNBA. All campaign materials should be disseminated electronically only.

- 12.6 Virtual platforms such as Zoom Video Communications, Microsoft Teams etc. should be used by the ECNBA to organize debates for candidates contesting for national offices of the NBA particularly that of the President and the General Secretary.
- 12.7 Mechanisms should be set up to ensure adherence to campaign guidelines and breaches of the guidelines should be promptly addressed and sanctioned.
- 12.8 Nomination forms should include rules of campaigning and an undertaking to be signed by candidates not to violate same. Upon the violation of any regulation by candidates, such candidates should be made to bear the consequences. The violation of campaign regulations should be taken seriously by the ECNBA and defaulting candidates should be appropriately sanctioned.
- 12.9 A campaign monitoring subcommittee should be established by the ECNBA for the enforcement of campaign regulations and for the disqualification of violators of the NBA election campaign provisions.
- 12.10 The Committee is of the firm view that money driven politics should not be allowed and candidates should be given the same opportunity to campaign. Factors such as character, service, performance, capacity, vision, leadership, reputation and professional impact of candidates should be at the forefront of criteria used in determining leaders in a professional association as opposed to the depth of the pockets of such candidates.
- 13 **Involvement of the Sitting NBA President in the Electoral Process:** Another area of concern identified by the committee is the involvement of the sitting NBA president in the NBA electoral process.

Recommendations

- 13.1 The Committee recommends that the sitting NBA President should not be involved with the electoral process other than as a member of NEC while NEC is executing its constitutional responsibilities relating to the election.²⁴
14. **NBA Rotational Policy as it relates to the different groups and/or sections in a Geographical Zone as stated in the Constitution:** Another area of concern is the interpretation of the constitutional provisions of zoning particularly with respect to the election to the office of the President.
- 14.1 The [rotational presidency](#) of the NBA was initially an informal arrangement until it was formalized by its incorporation into the NBA Constitution. Sadly, what started out as an

²⁴Section 9(1) of the Constitution and Paragraph 2.1 (c) of the Second Schedule

arrangement geared toward promoting an all-inclusive bar is now posing a threat to the unity of the Bar.²⁵

- 14.2 The NBA is divided into three (3) geographical zones for the purpose of electing National Officers namely- Northern Zone, Eastern Zone and Western Zone.²⁶ The list of states that make up the respective geographical zones are set out in Paragraph 1.2 (e) of the Second Schedule to the NBA Constitution.
- 14.3 The Northern Zone is made up of the following states: Adamawa, Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe, Zamfara and Abuja. The Eastern Zone is made up of the following states: Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Enugu, Bayelsa, Ebonyi, Cross River, Imo, and Rivers while the Western Zone is made up of the following states: Delta, Edo, Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo.
- 14.4 Since the amendment of the NBA Constitution in 2015, the geographical rotation of the position of President of the NBA has been complied with. In 2016, Mr. Abubakar Mahmoud, SAN from the Northern Zone was elected as President while in 2018, Mr. Paul Usoro, SAN from the Eastern Zone was elected and more recently in 2020, Mr. Olumide Akpata from the Western Zone was elected as President.
- 14.5 In past elections, members of the NBA have alleged that some ethnic associations within the NBA amass support for candidates from select states within a geographical zone thereby marginalizing candidates from other states despite the provisions of paragraph 2.2 (d) of the Second Schedule to the NBA Constitution which provides for the rotation of a position in turn by the different groups and/or sections in the geographical zone.

Recommendations

- 14.6 The Committee recommends as follows:
 - 14.6.1 The provisions of Section 9 (d) and Paragraph 2.2 (d) of the Second Schedule to the NBA Constitution should be strictly adhered to in order to ensure that no group and/or section in a geographical zone is marginalized and the unity of the bar is preserved.
 - 14.6.2 The NBA Constitution should be amended to specifically state/identify the different groups and/or sections in a geographical zone since different groups and/or sections do not appear to mean a state within the geographical zone.
 - 14.6.3 The ECNBA in its preliminary notice for the election of National Officers of the NBA should specify which group and/or section in a geographical zone the

²⁵ Memoranda by R.A Lawal-Rabana SAN, 13th November 2020.

²⁶Section 9 (d) of the NBA Constitution 2015 (as amended)

position is rotated to as a measure to ensure adherence to Section 9 (d) and Paragraph 2.2 (d) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution.

15. **Lack of Integrity and Late Publication of the List of Eligible Voters:** The absence of a credible voters' list was identified by the Committee as the most debilitating factor affecting the integrity of the election of National Officers since 2016. A credible voters' list is a derivative of a credible members' database and voter authentication. However, the lack of a credible up-to-date database of all members who meet the criteria below casted a shadow on the integrity of the list of eligible voters and generated a lot of controversy in the past elections.
- 15.1 The compilation and ascertaining of the list of eligible voters has been a major issue faced during past NBA elections of National Officers. The challenge of coming up with a comprehensive list of eligible voters has proved to be a herculean task for the NBA Secretariat.
- 15.2 Where there is no comprehensive database of the members of the NBA or a "verified database", there can hardly be a comprehensive list of eligible voters or effective compilation of the list of eligible voters to ensure a free and fair election and to avoid disenfranchising eligible voters.
- 15.3 The criteria for the eligibility of a member of the NBA to vote as stipulated in Paragraph 2.2 (f) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution are; membership of a branch, payment of BPF and Branch Dues as and when due, that is, 31st of March and registration to vote at that election.
- 15.4 The delay experienced in every election year in publishing the list of eligible voters is due to a poor record keeping regime of branches which give room for human errors and possible manipulation of the list of financial members.
- 15.5 The late compilation and publication of the list of eligible voters deprives the ECNBA of ample time to verify the information (email addresses and phone numbers) of eligible voters and adequately address complaints regarding the list thereby disenfranchising members with genuine complaints.

Recommendations

- 15.6 The Committee recommends as follows:
 - 15.6.1 The ECNBA should formally request for the list of members who paid their BPF and Branch Dues on or before the 31st of March not later than the 15th of April of the election year.

- 15.6.2 The payment of BPF and Branch dues should be through new Fintech payment providers such as Paga, Flutterwave, Paystack and others to ensure the easy reconciliation of payment data and verification of BPF and Branch dues. Migration of payment from manual and legacy systems to modern technology is critical to achieving unification of National and branch payment data.
- 15.6.3 Lawyers who prefer the traditional bank deposit mode of payment can be required to generate a Retrieval Reference Number on the NBA portal similar to Remita Retrieval Reference (“RRR”) and then make payments at the designated bank.
- 15.6.4 The payment of BPF and Branch Dues should serve as the basic criteria to determine voting eligibility and upon payment of the BPF and Branch Dues, members should be assigned voting ID or in the alternative, their payment reference number could be adopted as voting ID.
- 15.6.5 Branches should be encouraged to have their own website to enable members of that branch register, verify their details and pay their Branch Dues online and the website will capture members’ data such as their emails and phone numbers.
- 15.6.6 NBA branch fees (bank) tellers should be redesigned to accommodate critical member data and applied uniformly across branches.
- 15.6.7 The NBA IT infrastructure requires an overhaul. The membership and identity management solution should accommodate two forms of ID: Foundational ID (such as National Identification Number (“NIN”)) and the functional ID such as the Supreme Court Enrolment Number, Office ID cards, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. There should be an integration and adoption of the one ID Policy that is the Foundational ID provided for under Nigerian Law as the basis for identification and all other functional IDs will serve as support verification.
- 15.6.8 The verified list and contact details of financial members of the NBA who have paid their BPF and Branch Dues should be compiled promptly and made public shortly after the deadline for the payment of BPF, that is, the 31st of March of the election year and a subsequent reconfirmation before the election date to allow ample time for complaints to be addressed by the ECNBA.
- 15.6.9 Branches should be sensitized on the need to keep accurate data of members particularly from the year preceding the election year.

- 15.6.10 The verification process introduced in the 2020 Elections should be improved and simplified; data can be authenticated by linkages of source date from Supreme Court enrolment and date from payment of BPF and Branch dues.
 - 15.6.11 Voter education and awareness at the branch level of the NBA should be encouraged.
 - 15.6.12 The NBA website should be extremely secure and allow for linkages with existing systems, allowing seamless verification of members and on-boarding of new members.
 - 15.6.13 The NBA should provide laid down working procedure for automation and early release of voters' list.
 - 15.6.14 There should be a transparent and foolproof voters' list correction procedure to ensure checks and balances towards error free data collection, storage, and management for elections.
 - 15.6.15 A competent audit firm should be engaged by the ECNBA to confirm the integrity of the voters' list.
16. **Lack of Integrity of the NBA Voting Portal:** The introduction of electronic voting in the NBA Constitution has generated mixed reactions from members of the NBA. While some members hail the use of technology to improve the voting system, others are in doubt about the integrity of the voting portal following several allegations of disenfranchisement, rigging and manipulation of the voting portal in previous elections.
- 16.1 Other areas of concern were the lack of adequate information on the modalities for e-voting, the technology deployed and the security of the e-voting platform against possible hackers.

Recommendations

- 16.2 The Committee recommends as follows:
- 16.2.1 To ensure credible, free, fair and transparent election devoid of any suspicion, an independent and impartial third-party election voting platform should be selected to conduct the NBA election of National Officers and not a voting portal designed by the NBA.
 - 16.2.2 The criteria for engaging third-party e-voting platform must emphasize on transparency, security, privacy, accuracy, inclusiveness, cost-effectiveness, and efficiency.

17 **Involvement of the NBA Secretariat in the Electoral Process:** Over the years, the NBA National secretariat has served as a middleman between the members of the NBA and the ECNBA in the conduct of elections. For instance, paragraph 2.1(d) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution requires that completed nomination forms received from candidates in respect of elections of National Officers be forwarded to the NBA National Secretariat for onward dissemination to the ECNBA.

17.1 Also, the process of collation of eligible voters for NBA elections commence at the branch level. Respective branches forward the names, Supreme Court Numbers (SCN), telephone numbers and email addresses of their members to the National NBA Secretariat for onward dissemination to the ECNBA.

Recommendations

17.2 The Committee recommends as follows:

17.2.1 All forms of interference by the NBA National Secretariat or any other middlemen in the data handling process regarding the NBA elections of National Officers should be minimized as much as possible.

17.2.2 Candidates should be required to submit their nomination forms directly to the ECNBA. Towards achieving this, there is a need to amend the extant paragraph 2.1(d) of the Second Schedule of the NBA Constitution which requires candidates to submit nomination forms to the National Secretariat first.

17.2.3 An ECNBA online portal should be created for uploading nomination forms.

17.2.4 The NBA National Secretariat and branches should also forward the lists of those who have paid their BPF and Branch dues directly to the ECNBA to enable it compile the list of eligible voters based on the information provided.

18 **Poor IT Knowledge of some Lawyers:** It is taken that there are a lot of challenges inherent with the acquisition and deployment of technology. The 2016, 2018 and 2020 elections were conducted electronically and a lack of appreciation for the IT knowledge and skill capacity required of critical stakeholders in the NBA election of National Officers resulted in enormous challenges in the process.

18.1 Many members of the NBA especially those in remote areas and aged members are deficient in technology usage. This problem is coupled with the fact that in many instances the requisite sensitization and preparation required as per technology is not made available for these lawyers.

- 18.2 Even at the NBA Secretariat level, there is a dire [need to build digital capacity internally](#) by investing in technology knowledge and skill for the team.²⁷ The IT savviness of members of the NBA is also poor and in need of enhancement.
- 18.3 The problem of Non-IT savviness amongst many lawyers has created a leeway for suspicions, as candidates who attempted to assist non-IT savvy members are more often than not suspected. More so, some IT savvy members have turned into opportunists taking undue advantage of Non- IT savvy members in the name of assisting in the voting process, thereby providing “malicious support to unsuspecting voters”.²⁸
- 18.4 The Non-IT savviness surfaces at the NBA membership level, NBA branches and Secretariat level and even sometimes amongst candidates in an election.

Recommendations

- 18.5 The Committee recommends as follows:
- 18.5.1 Mock voting and verification exercises prior to the Election Day should be carried out to educate and equip the Non-IT savvy members of the NBA with at least minimal IT Skills required for the process.
- 18.5.2 Proper training on the use of the e-voting platform possibly during the NBA monthly meeting of branches is recommended. Training should also be done using self-help videos, chat box rooms and Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”) rooms²⁹ to sensitize members of the bar about the election process.
- 18.5.3 The voting process should be made as user-friendly as possible.

Election Day Issues/Challenges Identified by the Committee and Recommendations

- 19 **Failure to adequately and satisfactorily resolve complaints by eligible voters:** The past elections were riddled with all sorts of complaints on the election-day following the failure of the ECNBA and its service providers to adequately and satisfactorily resolve complaints by eligible voters leading to their inability to vote.

Recommendations.

- 19.1 The Committee recommends that there should be an efficient and effective resolution of complaints of non-receipt of voting links/ballot by the ECNBA and its service providers. The voting period should be extended by the ECNBA based on the recommendation of the election platform service provider to allow for resolution of complaints and minimize disenfranchisement.

²⁷ NBA ERAC Technology Sub-committee Report

²⁸ Memoranda submitted by Law Pavilion

²⁹ Memorandum submitted by Law Pavilion

- 19.2 The ECNBA should roll out adequate information on how to ensure that eligible voters receive their voting links without any technical hindrance on their path. For instance, electronic fliers on how to rectify the issue of spam filters and deactivate the “Do Not Disturb” feature on the voter’s phone should be released by the ECNBA.
- 19.3 The ECNBA should map out ample time in the entire election process timeline to deal with complaints regarding voting links.
- 19.4 Voters should be sensitized on the need to keep the voting links sent to them private and not to share on social media or transfer to a third party.
- 20 **Inadequate Monitoring of Voting and Collation of Election Results:** The 2020 election platform afforded the electorates the opportunity to view the elections in real time. However, according to the NBA 2020 post-election report, the election servers were strained by the high volume of hits to the election platform and this prompted the ECNBA to present the result in short intervals and host same in a separate URL (<http://go.nigerianbar.org.ng>) from that of the elections.

Recommendations

- 20.1 The Committee recommends that:
- 20.1.1 The e-voting platform should be strengthened to accommodate high traffic in order to enable voters enjoy a smooth voting experience and monitor the election results in real time without intermittent timeouts. However, if the election servers are strained by high volume of hits to the election platform, the ECNBA can present the result in short intervals and host same in a separate URL from that of the elections.

Post-Election Issue/Challenge Identified by the Committee and Recommendations

- 21 **Lack of Independent Post-Election Audit of Elections:** The most crucial aspect of the ECNBA’s work is to ensure that after the conduct of elections, a post-election audit is conducted and its report published.
- 21.1 The elections of National Officers of the NBA which were conducted via electronic means have been questioned by different stakeholders especially because of the non-provision of post-election audit report.

Recommendations.

- 21.2 The Committee recommends as follows:
- 21.2.1 A post-election audit exercise should be carried out by an independent body to

build the integrity, credibility, and fairness of the election process.

- 21.2.2 Post-election audit exercise must be carried out within a stipulated timeframe by the ECNBA after the election of National Officers; such exercise should give room for the input of all relevant stakeholders.³⁰
 - 21.2.3 An independent auditor who has no stake in the election, may be retained as an integral part of the whole election process from start to finish.
 - 21.2.4 A post-election audit committee should be constituted and mandated to review the audit of the elections and proffer recommendations.
- 21.3 The Committee also recommends that to ensure transparency of the election, the following should be done:
- 21.3.1 Each voter should have a ballot receipt with unique serial number for audit purposes but without names.
 - 21.3.2 The election result should have a drill down capability, such that each voter can go on the portal to verify their votes, using their unique serial number, and ascertain that the vote recorded against their names actually tally with the candidates they chose, to mitigate the possibility of backend manipulation. Voters should also have the opportunity to drill down votes recorded for each candidate and to view the list of serial numbers of voters for that candidate.
 - 21.3.3 The names of actual members that voted from each branch should be published, and the total number of voters on a branch-by-branch basis must match that of the total numbers of voters to be sure there was no e-ballot stuffing. This will ensure that no outsider voted in any NBA branch, and anyone that did not cast a vote but had their names listed on the voters' list could easily lay complaints as to proxy-voting.
 - 21.3.4 Each ballot receipt should also contain a voting signature that is encoded and uniquely computed, to mitigate the possibility of false claims by bad losers.³¹
 - 21.3.5 The post-election audit report must be [submitted to the ECNBA and published](#) on the ECNBA and NBA websites. It is believed that such a published report would serve as an advisory template towards the conduct and improvement of future elections.³²

22 Conclusion

³⁰Memorandum submitted by Dr. Babatunde Ajibade, SAN.

³¹Memorandum submitted by Law Pavilion

³²Memorandum submitted by the NBA Degema Branch

- 22.1 The Committee is of the firm view that if the recommendations contained in this Final Report are implemented, future elections of National Officers of the NBA by electronic voting will be devoid of the controversies which have plagued past elections.
- 22.2 As the NBA remains the foremost professional association in Nigeria, the NBA should be a beacon of light and a bastion of hope to the Nation in every respect including in the conduct of elections.
- 22.3 The NBA must therefore commit to making the required changes to its electoral processes and reference point for conducting credible, free and fair elections in Nigeria and rebuild confidence in the electoral process for the overall good of all. NBA must be true to its motto which is “*promoting the rule of law*”.
- 22.4 The Committee is grateful to the NBA President, Mr. Olumide Akpata and NEC for the confidence they reposed in members of the Committee to carry out this assignment.
- 22.5 We thank the NBA for the opportunity to be of service.

SUBMITTED THIS 16TH DAY OF MARCH, 2021

Mr. Ayodele Akintunde, SAN, CARb.
Chairman

Mrs. Nnenna Uko, FCARB.
Secretary

Mr. Mike Igini (Ikeja Branch)	–	Vice Chairman
Mr. Basil Udotai (Abuja Branch)	–	Member
Mr. John Owubokiri (Port Harcourt Branch)	–	Member
Mr. Ama Etuwewe, SAN (Warri Branch)	–	Member
Ms. Oludayo Olorunfemi (Ikere - Ekiti Branch)	–	Member
Mr. Rotimi Ogunyemi (Lagos Branch)	–	Member
Mr. Mas’ud Alabalewe (Barnawa Branch)	–	Member
Miss. Hadiza Nasir Ahmad (Kano Branch)	–	Member
Mr. Andrew Odum (Asaba Branch)	–	Member
Mrs. Altine Ibrahim (Damaturu Branch)	–	Member
Mrs. Joyce Oduah, FICMC, General Secretary	–	Ex-Officio member