

Nigeria: Google launches online portal for 2015 elections

Google has announced it launched an online portal where voters can keep an eye on the latest news about Nigerian politics in the run-up to the general elections in February.

The Portal located at www.google.ng/elections was designed to serve as a one-stop resource centre for information on every aspect of the coming Polls, providing readily accessible data on persons, groups and events involved in and centred around the Elections.



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A one-stop resource

According to Google's Communications and Public Affairs Manager for Nigeria, Taiwo Kola-Ogunlade, the portal is a one-stop resource containing voting information and news relating to the elections. All news, videos and digital media to have appeared about the election or the parties are collected in one place and can be viewed on desktop or with tablets and mobile phones.

He stated: "The Internet continues to play an increasingly major role in the way political parties and voters take part in elections in Africa. Today, it's easier for voters to actively take part in the electoral process because they now have faster access to news and information relating to the process.

"Visitors to the Portal will be able to access news, features and audiovisual content on the political parties and their candidates, other major players and the various preparations by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, in the run-up to the polls. There are also interactive platforms that will enable the candidates better articulate their manifestos and Agenda to the voting public who in turn can task the office seekers on issues of interest to them.

"While the major theme of the portal is Information and Enlightenment, there are other features that are also designed to encourage eligible voters to vote come Election Day. We have the 'Pledge to Vote' feature which allows visitors to publicly commit to vote via personalized #pledgetovote badges which can be downloaded and shared with their friends and the public via social media", Kola-Ogunlade says.

He added, "We think that by sharing pictures and images of their badges with friends or acquaintances on Facebook and other social media, they too may be encouraged to make a pledge. The more people who commit, the greater the voter turnout and the better Nigeria's democracy would be for it.

"It's not the first time that Google has launched an Election Hub for a country, the concept was first launched in 2007, and has since had over 40 editions including during the 2013 Ghana and Kenya polls."

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