ANALYSIS AND PLANNING: Violence in the campaign and on election day
“…Acts or threats of coercion, intimidation or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arises in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the process of elections – such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll – and to influence the outcomes: the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions.”

UNDP, Timothy Sisk 2009

“Electoral conflict and violence can be defined as any random or organised act or threat to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail or abuse a political stakeholder in seeking to determine, delay, or to otherwise influence an electoral process.”

Jeff Fischer 2002
Violence overwhelming takes place in pre-vote phase. Of 124 cases of elections that saw violence, 117 reported violence in pre-vote phase and 37 reported violence in post vote.

Strauss and Taylor

Election day is the least volatile stage in the three months before and three months after the elections. More violence takes place before (46%) and after (43%). But it is the most violent single day.

Dorin Bekoe, U.S. Institute for Peace
Campaign violence

- Perpetrators?
- Victims?
- Methods, intensity?
- Location?
- Motives?
- Triggers?
- Causes, enabling conditions?
- Effects?
- Attacks on candidates, supporters or families
- Clashes between rival supporters
- Intimidation of opposition, media
- Bombs or bomb scares on rallies
- Attacks on electoral officials
- Attacks on observers
Election day violence

- Perpetrators?
- Victims?
- Methods?
- Location?
- Motives?
- Triggers?
- Causes, enabling conditions?
- Effects?
- Intimidation of voters to compel them to support one party or candidate, or to keep them away (gender-based?)
- Attacks on electoral officials
- Theft or physical attacks on election materials, eg. Destroyed or snatched ballot boxes
- Attacks by armed rebel groups or insurgents to disrupt polling
- Disruption or fighting during count
“Since 2007 the Conservatives have focused activity on the marginal seats that could deliver a victory at the next election, though both spacially-concentrated centrally-directed activities (voter surveys and telephone canvassing) and grants to constituency party offices to fund local campaigns. While voters there are subjected to such intensive activity seeking their support, voters elsewhere, where it is unlikely that their constituency would change hands, are being relatively ignored.”

British Academy: Choosing an Electoral System
“Those states especially susceptible to election-related violence around governorship elections are those with vulnerable governors, strong challengers who expect to win, personal rivalries between candidates or their backers; politicians who have broken with their sponsors or exploit social cleavages; or that lack respected peacemakers.”

Crisis Group ahead of Nigeria 2011
Three or more parties (3.5+ ENPV)
1. Most Indian states in 2002: e.g., Kerala, Bihar, Orissa
2. Bulgaria post-1990
3. Malaysian national governments since independence

Two parties (2-3.5 ENPV)

Government relies on minority votes
1. Three Indian states in 2002: Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan
2. USA national-level post-1948

Government does not rely on minority votes
1. One Indian state in 2002: Gujarat
2. Romanian national govt. 1990
4. Irish local governments in early 19th C. (until 1865 in Belfast)
5. Selangor state government in Malaysia 1969

Government will not prevent riots

Figure 1.1 The relationship between party competition and a state's response to anti-minority polarization and violence: Indian and non-Indian examples (ENVP = effective number of parties)
Where will violence take place?
Constituency-based risk mapping

**Contextual**
- History of violence
- Societal divides – ethnic, sectarian
- High unemployment
- Inequality
- Marginalised groups
- Weak rule of law
- Insurgents, rebels
- Land disputes
- Resource rivalries
- Availability of weapons - DDR
- Opportunities for patronage

**Candidates**
- Financial backers
- History of violence
- Supporters?
- Access to suppliers of violence - DDR
- Fraud?

**Campaigning**
- Bridging or bonding
- Appeals to identity
- Use of violence
- Mobilising armed groups

**Competition**
- Stakes, spoils
- Tight race
- Expectations
- Close vote margins
- Incumbent faces serious challenge

**Regulators**
- Local authorities – EMB, judicial, security, govt
- Traditional peace makers
- Registration problems