

6 dead as PDP, AC clash in Okene

TIMOTHY AJIBOYE, Lokoja

NO fewer than six persons lost their lives in a renewed politically motivated violence that broke out in Okene yesterday between supporters of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Action Congress (AC).

In addition, four policemen were seriously injured in the crisis as various dangerous weapons like gun, axe, machetes and charms were freely used for the four hours the crisis lasted.

Eyewitness said that the violence started during a street rally organised by PDP to thank the entire Okene Community for voting enmasse for the PDP governorship candidate Alhaji Ibrahim in re-run election, when supporters of Action Congress (AC) emerged from no where to attack the peaceful rally.

Sources said, the supporters of AC believed that the result of Okene was rigged to favour the PDP as the town is the stronghold of AC.

The sources added that the "thank you" rally by PDP was another way of provoking the community and AC in particular who had maintained a cease fire in order for the joint candidate of ANPP/AC, Prince Abubaka Audu to file his petition before the election petition Tribunal whenever the Tribunal is constituted.

During the rally, our source explained that anti AC and ANPP music were sung to provoke the supporters of AC, which resulted in the violence that engulfed the area.

In his reaction the caretaker chairman of Okene, Hon Abubakar Karaku alleged that the Police aided the AC to attack members of the PDP during the peaceful rally, explaining that those killed were as a result of bullet sustained from police rifles.

But, the Police Public Relation Officer (PPRO) Mr Innocent Inalegwu (ASP) denied the allegation, explaining that people died as a result of axe and machete cuts not police bullet, promising that

the police high command was ever ready to maintain peace and order in Okene.

The Deputy governor, Chief Philip Salawu had visited the area where he explained that government would arrest those behind the renewed crisis no matter how highly placed they are in the society.

Equally, a truck load of heavily armed anti-riot policemen (MOPOL) had been deploy to Okene to maintain law and order.

NITEL workers su

AKOR SYLVESTER, Abuja

STRIKING workers of the morbid Nigerian Telecommunication (NITEL) yesterday suspended their nine-day industrial action, even as they called on the Federal Government to immediately take over the full management of NITEL from Transcorp Plc on account of the current dwindling fortunes of the firm.

The decision to suspend the strike action embarked by the National Association of Telecommunication (NATE) was