

One feared killed as youths disrupt Borno PDP rally

From Sharafa Dauda and Yahaya Ibrahim

ONE person is feared killed while others, including a police officer were seriously injured following a clash between rival youth groups of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) at the commissioning of the Goodluck Support Group (GSG) state secretariat in Maiduguri on Saturday.

The event was underway with guests such as the host, Senator Mohammed Sanusi Daggash, the National Coordinator of the group, Ahmed Ali Gulak, Senator Mohammed Abba Aji and Former FCT Minister, Engineer Abba Gana, as well as state PDP executives and their sup-

porters already seated when youths armed with dangerous weapons stormed the venue at Sir Kashim Ibrahim Way in Maiduguri to obstruct the commissioning.

Trouble started after Kashim Ibrahim Imam, the former governorship aspirant of the party in 2003 and 2007 was invited to give a speech, but was not allowed to speak and was almost lynched by party youths believed to be loyal to one of the factions but for the quick intervention of the police State Security Services operatives who fired guns and tear gas canisters in the air.

Armed youths used knives, daggers, cutlasses and axes on one

another. The man who died was said to have been hit on the head with a huge stone and died shortly after.

Sources said Kashim, who declined comment after the incident, was officially invited and had planned not to attend but was convinced by the party leadership to use the event as a starting point for the internal reform agenda of the party, following the signing of an undertaking by all 17 stakeholders to resolve the internal crisis in the party.

Ambassador Saidu Shettima Pindar, who had already declared his intention to contest the gubernatorial seat in 2011, and acknowledged that there were leadership problems, the major one being with the local gov-

ernment congresses where people were imposed on party followers.

National Coordinator of the Goodluck Support Group, Ahmed Ali Gulak, told newsmen after the commissioning that Goodluck Jonathan's 2011 presidential bid would serve a unifying purpose. "Even if there are factions in the PDP in Borno State, Goodluck Jonathan has become a unifying factor. All factions, if there were, have agreed to work for Goodluck Jonathan. And that is why everybody in the PDP (the stakeholders) was at the occasion. That is why I said I am satisfied because all the groups were there, well represented and in support for Goodluck Jonathan," he told newsmen.