

Kaduna LG polls: Stray bullet kills 9-year-old as apathy mars exercise

From Mohammed I. Yaba, Abdulkadir Shehu & Aliyu Babankarfi, Kaduna

A stray bullet allegedly from military personnel yesterday killed nine-year-old Zainab Bala-Umar at Gwanki Ward, Makarfi Local Government Area during the ongoing local government elections in Kaduna State.

An eye witness, Alhaji Yahaya Gwanki, told *Daily Trust on Sunday* that the stray bullet was discharged from military personnel in efforts to disperse crowd after the soldier was invited by a chieftain of the All Progressives Congress in the area.

The eyewitness said the chieftain, who is also a candidate in the election had gone to one of the polling units under Fadamar Gwanki and while having a conversation with an electoral officer over some challenges with the e-voting machine, some youths began to chant "ba ma so, ba ma so" meaning "we don't want."

He said the development made the chieftain to invite soldiers who shot in the air and in the process, the girl was hit and she died.

However, Police Public Relations Officer, Kaduna State Command, ASP Mohammed Jalige, said military personnel were not allowed to be at the polling units.

He said the police would arrest the suspects, investigate the matter and brief the press.

Meanwhile, there was voter apathy in many local government areas of Kaduna State as residents went to the polls to elect councillors and local government chairmen across 19 of Kaduna's 23 local government areas yesterday.

Only a few voters were seen lining up for accreditation before they later cast their votes in polling units across the metropolis and Zaria.

After casting his vote at Unguwan Sarki, Governor Nasir El-Rufai of Kaduna State said his administration does not believe in rigging elections and stressed that he would not behave like other state governments where the ruling party wins all the LGAs.

PDP kicks, says election a sham

Daily Trust on Sunday reports that midway into the election, the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) held a press conference where it kicked against the election, describing it as a sham.

According to the PDP in a conference held by its Publicity Secretary, Abraham Catch, the election was full of irregularities

while the electronic voting machines had been programmed to accept and print votes for the APC.

He said contrary to initial assurance by the electoral body that the machine will at the beginning print out figures 000 as proof that it was not tampered with; some machines had started printing with allocated huge votes to the APC even before vote casting started.

The Kaduna State APC Chairman, Emmanuel Jekada did not respond to calls and text message on the allegations.



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