

Osun LG crisis: Ex-council chair, others killed

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The crisis rocking Osun State over the leadership of local governments escalated yesterday as several people were killed following attempts by the sacked All Progressives Congress's council chairmen to resume at their respective secretariats.

A chieftain of All Progressive Congress (APC) and former chairman of Irewole Local Government Area of the state, Remi Abbas, was among those killed during the crisis.

The APC claimed that the Court of Appeal's judgement delivered on Monday reinstated the sacked council chairmen and councilors elected during the tenure of former Governor Adegboyega Oyetola; while the state government alleged their elections had been nullified by the Federal High Court in Osogbo in another case.

Governor Ademola Adeleke had, at the weekend, alleged that Oyetola, who is the Minister of Marine and Blue Economy, was planning to cause mayhem in the state ahead of the February 22 local council election in the state.

The state chapter of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) had on Sunday asked its members at local governments to withdraw their services.

The sacked chairmen attempted to resume at their secretariats but were resisted by members of the PDP.

There were pockets of violence around Osogbo, Boripe, Irewole and Ola-Oluwa LGAs and others.

Governor Adeleke orders shutdown of LG secretariats

Governor Ademola Adeleke yesterday shut down all local government council secretariats in the state to prevent further breakdown of law and order.

Adeleke, according to a statement by his spokesman, Olawale Rasheed, directed Osun residents, including politicians across political divides, to stay away from the local government secretariats to protect public properties and avoid further bloodshed.

The statement read, "In a reaction to the current illegal APC takeover bid of local governments in Osun state, the governor affirmed that since the local government workers are on strike, only security agencies should be allowed to man the secretariats.

"I therefore direct all law abiding Osun residents to stay away from the council secretariats especially as they are expected to be under lock and key.

"I equally condole families



Residents of Osun State thrown into panic over sporadic gunshots, yesterday

of victims of the APC illegal takeover bid and chaos unleashed across the state by the APC and their hired thugs. PDP lost five members with several others wounded. Two of those members are from Iragbiji, Boripe local government. Another two were killed at Ola Oluwa Local Government. Another one was lost at Ikire. We must stop the bloodshed."

The governor assured residents of their safety and protection of lives and properties, saying that he had directed security agencies to take charge of all local government secretariats.

PDP's hoodlums killed our members - APC

Addressing a press conference yesterday at the Iloroluwa Campaign Office, Osogbo, the APC's chairman in the state, Tajudeen Lawal, alongside the Executive Director, Federal Housing Authority, Remi Omowaiye; former Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs in the state, Adebayo Adeleke and former Special Adviser on Education, Jamiu Olawumi, alleged that PDP's hoodlums killed his members.

He accused Governor Adeleke of setting the state on fire and "arrogantly" refusing to obey the court order that reinstated the sacked APC elected council chairmen and councilors.

Lawal confirmed the killing of the chairman of Irewole LGA, Remi Abbas and others.

Omowaiye said: "They are killing our people. A lot of our people are missing as of this moment. We have received information across the Local Government Areas and we have the record of those that were killed and maimed. Our people are brutally attacked. It is unfortunate that Governor Adeleke forgot that Osun is not his property.

"Just few minutes ago, PDP's thugs waylaid me and my team from Ilesa while coming to Osogbo and the thugs were led by the PDP House of Assembly

member, Olawale Akerele popularly called "Water." And they have gone to attack my campaign office in Ilesa. My vehicle was shot as the driver was almost killed. The gunshot can be seen on my vehicle.

"Situation is similar in other places. The hoodlums were led by Amotekun Corps and I am calling on the Inspector General of Police to proscribe Amotekun in Osun. They have turned to PDP's thugs, killing and maiming Osun citizens. I am an appointee of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. I am a council chairman, so, why were they running after me? Please ask them.

"We call for immediate arrest of those that perpetrated this massacre. The law must take its due course."

APC's thugs killed our 5 members - PDP

The state chairman of the PDP, Sunday Bisi, in a statement, alleged that "the brutal and coordinated attacks" were carried out by APC's thugs "led by Asiri Eniba and backed by armed security agents."

He stated: "These attacks, which began as early as 7 a.m. today, have resulted in the deaths of five PDP members and left over fifty others injured across various local government areas in Osun State.

"These heinous acts were committed under the false pretext of enforcing a misinterpretation of a recent Appeal Court ruling, which in no way reinstated the illegally sacked APC local government chairmen. In a desperate bid to unlawfully seize control of local governments, the APC resorted to violence, causing widespread mayhem."

He said the worst-hit areas included Boripe, Olaoluwa, Isokan, and Ilesa West Local Government Areas "where heavily armed APC thugs, led by known political figures, unleashed terror on innocent PDP supporters.

"In Boripe Local Government, particularly in Iragbiji and Agba, two PDP members were gruesomely murdered. Over

twenty PDP members sustained serious injuries while gathering in preparation for the grand finale of our local government election rally, which was to be graced by Governor Ademola Adeleke. These attacks were clearly orchestrated to instill fear and suppress the democratic rights of the people of Boripe, the home local government of former Governor Gboyega Oyetola."

"Eyewitness reports confirm that APC thugs moved in coordinated groups, targeting PDP strongholds, disrupting activities, and attacking innocent party members. These attacks involved the reckless use of firearms, with thugs shooting indiscriminately at peaceful PDP supporters. The scenes of horror in Boripe Local Government left families devastated, struggling to comprehend why their loved ones were subjected to such brutality simply for supporting the PDP."

"We strongly condemn the actions of the APC and its violent enforcers in Boripe. Their resort to bloodshed is a testament to their desperation and rejection by the people. We call on security agencies to investigate these crimes and ensure that the perpetrators face the full wrath of the law."

"In Olaoluwa Local Government, another two PDP members were gunned down in cold blood, while several others barely escaped with gunshot wounds. Similarly, in Isokan, APC thugs attacked our members, wounding party leader Prince Wahab, while others narrowly escaped gunfire from these violent operatives."

"The violence escalated in Ilesa West, where APC thugs, led by former Osun State Commissioner for Works, Mr. Oluremi Omowaye, and the APC chairmanship candidate, Mr. Tobi Famurawa, stormed the venue of a peaceful PDP gathering and opened fire indiscriminately. This reckless display of violence resulted in severe injuries to PDP chieftains Hon. Tunde Eje and Hon. Kasali, as well as an innocent

young woman selling bread by the roadside."

We'll fish out perpetrators-IGP

The Inspector-General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, yesterday said he had ordered a tactical squad to restore peace in Osun State.

Egbetokun, in a statement by the Force spokesman, Olumuyiwa Adejobi, also vowed that those who killed and maimed would be brought to book, saying the Force would not tolerate any act of hooliganism, lawlessness and anarchy in the state.

The statement read, "In response to the ongoing violence in Osun State, the Nigeria Police Force has condemned, in strong terms, the incidents that have disrupted peace and safety in the state, and vowed to bring the perpetrators to justice.

"These violent actions had disrupted the peace, leading to the destruction of property, and the unfortunate loss of innocent lives.

"The Inspector-General of Police, IGP Kayode Adeolu Egbetokun, has taken decisive action by ordering the deployment of additional tactical squads to Osun State to bolster security and restore law and order.

"The Police recognizes that violence undermines the democratic process and threatens the wellbeing of the citizens, and hereby affirms its commitment to identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators of these acts and caused them to face the full weight of the law.

"The IGP issues a stern warning to those who threaten the peace and stability in Osun State, as the Force will not tolerate any act of lawlessness, hooliganism and anarchy in the state.

"The perpetrators of these criminal acts will be fished out and be caused to face the consequences of their unwarranted ill-fated acts. Citizens must remain calm as normalcy is being restored.

"Osun indigenes, leaders and stakeholders are hereby urged to shun violence and go about their legitimate businesses.

"The judiciary remains the ultimate arbiter of all electoral disputes and political actors must respect and abide by its rulings, upholding the rule of law and democratic principles.

"Citizens are advised to go about their lawful business. The Force reiterates its commitment to clamping down on any violent actors who bent on creating brouhaha and breakdown of law and order in any part of the country.

"The situation in Osun will be closely monitored, and measures will be enforced to ensure a safe environment for all residents."