

## DELTA

# Violence Rocks Five Councils

FROM SUNNY OGEFEHE, ASABA

**VIOLENCE** erupted in certain local government areas, resulting in the suspension of elections in five local council areas - Udu, Okpe, Uvwie, Ukwani and Ethiope East Council areas.

According to INEC spokesman in the state, Livvy Unigwe, the elections in Udu were suspended for the House of Assembly contest because the name of the Accord Party (AP) did not appear on the ballot paper.

It was gathered that the suspension in other council areas was as a result of violence and tension arising from alleged disappearance of electoral materials.

The INEC offices in Obiaruku and Orerokpe headquarters of Ukwani and Okpe councils were set ablaze by aggrieved youths.

The police spokesperson, Miss Olabisi Okuwobi disclosed that two buildings were burnt in Abraka, the hometown of Chief Great Ogboru, the governorship candidate of Democratic Peoples Party (DPP).

Unconfirmed sources claimed that one of the buildings belongs to a serving commissioner in the administration of Governor James Ibori, while the other building belongs to a lecturer with the Delta State University, Abraka.

Some unconfirmed sources claimed that some persons were killed in Abraka.

Okuwobi also said attempts made to burn down the Abraka police station were foiled by the heavily armed policemen at the station. She confirmed that more policemen have been mobilised to the trouble zones across the state and that normalcy was gradually being restored.

Meanwhile, three armoured vehicles, which arrived Abraka, two days ago, were spotted still patrolling the streets. The situation remained tensed.

Voting commenced a little late in Asaba, Delta State capital, but electoral materials and officials could not be found in most centres in the neighbouring towns of Okpanam, Illah, Ibusa and Ogwashi-Uku as at 11am.

Besides, as at 12 noon, no electoral materials and officials were spotted in voting centres at Obiaruku, headquarters of Ukwani Council area and in Abraka, Ethiope East Council area.

Also, security problem was reported in Isiokolo headquarters of Ethiope East Council where the electoral materials were allegedly taken away by some youths who stormed where they were kept at about 4am.

Reports from the local council area have it that no materials got to the voting centres in the area.

The State Resident Electoral Commissioner, Alhaji Asmaila Adbulkareem confirmed that there was a "security situation" in Ethiope East and Ughelli, but claimed that he was yet to be briefed by the Electoral Officers in charge of the areas.

However, he said that measure were already being taken to tackle the problem, promising as at 12.05pm yesterday that in one hour's time, voting would commence.

In Asaba, soldiers in two vehicles - a Peugeot Expert car and a Toyota Hilux Pick Up Van - patrolled the streets at intervals while the elections were going on peacefully.

The turn out at Owa-Oyibo and Agbor, headquarters of Ika North East and Ika South was impressive and the voting was peaceful.

The state governor voted at Oghara ward 8 at about 10.30am yesterday morning.