

ABIA

FROM GORDI UDEAJAH, UMUAHIA

IMPRESSIVE turnout of voters recorded in parts of Abia State was marred by late arrival of voting materials, especially in areas outside Umuahia, the state capital and violence in which two mobile police officers were shot.

The policemen were shot at Ohuhu area, the home of three gubernatorial candidates of Chiefs Onyema Ugochukwu (PDP), Ikechi Emenike (ANPP) and Uzodinma Okpara (APGA).

Officers, attached to Ugochukwu, were shot in the head and while one of the suspected hired thugs was arrested with the two buses in which they operated and abandoned while they fled.

Ugochukwu, whose Peugeot 406 car was also riddled with bullets, initially alleged that "members of the Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA) hijacked the process and were out to stop me."

However, supporters of Ugochukwu and Emenike accused each other of being responsible for the violence that featured sporadic shootings at Umuahia — Emenike's village, which is not far from Umuahia. Ugochukwu's

Two Mopol Shot, Records Large Turnout

village — such that both were scared from going to cast their votes.

Addressing journalists who visited his home, Ugochukwu expressed surprise at the development, saying that he thought it was the PPA that was out to stop his victory but that it turned out to be the ANPP.

The reporters could not get Emenike's comments even with two visits to his house.

Yesterday, Abia State governor, Chief Orji Uzor Kalu, after he had cast his vote at his Igberere village, advised INEC to extend the voting period beyond 3pm, as materials for the state Assembly were yet to arrive at about 1pm.

He, however, reposed confidence in the exercise, expressing optimism that his PPA would record a resounding victory.

Chief Iheanacho Obioma, the Action Congress (AC) candidate said it was a complaint galore.