

11 killed as thugs unleash violence in Delta

ELECTIONS in several parts of Delta State were marred by violence. No fewer than 11 people were feared killed in clashes among party supporters.

In Delta-Central Senatorial District, seven persons were killed in the zone.

The violence was not unconnected with the alleged shoddy handling of the polls by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the district, which by 12 noon could not get its officials to most polling stations where people had queued since 8:00 a.m. to vote but could not find the commission's officials.

Although polls reportedly took place in Delta North and South senatorial districts and in 19 of the 25 local councils in the state without much violence, Delta-Central District was a battleground as political thugs believed to be loyalists to opposition parties and those of the PDP engaged in a fight.

The highest number of casualty was in Orhuwho-

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run Road in Udu area, at the palatial home of a PDP stalwart known as Poge, where seven persons were confirmed killed and two others severely wounded in a protracted gun duel between PDP loyalists and those of opposition parties.

All the buildings in the estate were burnt down. The body of a young man was still lying in front of the razed estate yesterday morning.

It was learnt that the hoodlums who were working for some opposition parties suspected that rigging was going on inside the Poge Estate, besieged the place in large numbers and exchanged gunfire with security men in the area. Guns were freely fired that three passers-by were reportedly killed.

Abraka and Effurun in Ethiope-East and Uvwie councils were also no-go areas as hoodlums blocked the Agbor-Eku Road with debris and destroyed vehicles that had any link with the government.