

## NEWS

## Two feared killed in C'River council polls campaign

NO fewer than two persons were on Wednesday feared killed in Calabar-South Council as the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) sensitisation campaign team for August 28 council and 2011 polls toured the area.

In the past one month, the state PDP executive members led by its chairman, Ntufam Ekpo Okon, have been touring councils for campaigns and sensitisation of its members but it turned violent at the Calabar-South Council.

As usual, supporters of

various candidates, some of who were armed, paraded the streets of Calabar-South driving recklessly and brandishing posters of their candidates, causing confusion and serious traffic jam in the city.

Unfortunately, a tipper driver caught in the thick of the traffic jam and in an attempt to avoid the rowdy campaign, knocked down a boy who was pushing a wheelbarrow full of soft drinks. The boy later died.

Instantly, the party enthusiasts of one of the

From Anietie Akpan,  
Calabar

candidates pulled out machetes from their backs and dealt several cuts on the tipper driver whose identity was not immediately ascertained.

The Guardian gathered that he was mistaken to be a supporter of one of the rival candidates and thought the man had killed one of their own and chased him to a nearby shop where they brought out machetes and attacked him.

An eyewitness said he was rushed to the General Hospital,

Calabar, by some Good Samaritans but could not get any medical attention as the workers were on strike. On their way to the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, he died.

The incident occurred at Anantigha, close to the Calabar-South headquarters around 4.00 p.m. where supporters of the incumbent chairman, Mr. Andem Bassey and the vice chairman, Mrs. Marjorie, campaigned. Both the chairman and his vice are aspiring for the council's chairmanship seat.

It was gathered that the vice chairman was having a running battle with her boss, most especially as she intends to run against him at the August 28, 2010, council polls.

The state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ibrahim Ahmed, was said to be on tour of the council as well but

the Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Etim Dickson, said he had no idea of the incident.

Okon said: "We are in touch with the security agencies. If we confirm the involvement of any aspirant or party member, we will deal with such persons accordingly."

## Edo community leader petitions police over alleged ex-militant's attack

BARELY 24 hours after the Federal Government announced that former militants would soon begin their suspended rehabilitation exercise, a community leader in Safarogbo Village in Ovia South-West Council, Pius Perewari, yesterday petitioned the Police in Edo State, alleging attacks by a former militant in the area, Oomo Etonwerigha.

Although Etonwerigha could not be reached yesterday as his phone was said to be switched off, Perewari said he was attacked because he had refused to allow illegal bunkering to take place in his community since all those believed to be involved in the illegal act had embraced the amnesty programme.

He claimed that some of the erstwhile militants only pretended to have embraced the amnesty as they have "continued to carry guns and have resumed acts of extorting money from those travers-

From Alemma-Ozioruva  
Aliu, Benin City

ing the Safarogbo river, engaging in robbery, illegal bunkering, oil theft, harassment and intimidation of fellow Ijaw brothers with increased vigour as if the amnesty was in fact, a licence for criminality".

He also alleged in the petition, which was copied to the Inspector General of Police, Assistant Inspector General of Police, AIG Zone 5, the Commissioner of Police in Ondo State and Directors of State Security Service (SSS) in Edo and Ondo states, that he was abducted last week, tortured and extorted to the tune of N200,000 because he was against any form of militancy in the area.

He further alleged that even after he parted with the money, which he said belonged to the community, he was dumped in another village, Ajatinton, where he was rescued by a "Good Samaritan" and returned to his village after which he said he had to flee to Benin, the state capital, for safety.

He said he petitioned security agencies in both states because the leader of the group who is from the border town between the two states actually accepted the amnesty offer in Ondo State.

"Even now that I ran to Benin to make this report and also to receive treatment, having been seriously battered, information reaching me has it that Etonwerigha is coming to burn down my house and my people have packed out all my belongings from the house".

When The Guardian visited the state Police Command in Benin yesterday, a senior police officer said the petition was already receiving attention.



• Lagos State Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola (second left); Special Adviser, Commerce and Industry, Mrs. Sola Owuro (right); Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, Adeniyi Oyemade (second right) and President, Lagos State Council of Trademen and Artisans, Bola Sanusi, at the grand finale of tradesmen and artisans in Lagos...at the weekend

## Man electrocuted, PHCN workers threaten strike

A MAN was electrocuted on Wednesday in Ilorin, Kwara State capital, while two others sustained serious injuries when the anchor of their crane vehicle accidentally touched a high tension cable of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria, (PHCN) at Ita-Alamu area of the state capital.

According to sources, the incident occurred at about 1.00 p.m. when the victims were trying to mount a signpost for a new filling station adjoining the live cable.

The conductor of the crane died on the spot while two others inside the vehicle were thrown outside apparently due to the

intensity of the current flow.

While the remains of the deceased have been evacuated, those injured were rushed to the emergency wing of University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UIITH) for prompt medical attention.

However, Spokesman of the Kwara State Police Command, Assistant Superintendent Ezekiel Debo, said he was yet to be briefed on the development when The Guardian contacted him on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Electricity Employees (NUEE) has threatened to start a strike action on May 17 if

From Abiodun Fagbemi  
(Ilorin) and  
Isa Abdulsalami (Jos)

the PHCN management failed to order the immediate payment of their monetisation arrears and initiate the payment of the balance of 137 per cent of their salary increase nationwide.

A statement by Zonal Organising Secretary, NUEE North-East Zone, Anthony Sule in Jos on Wednesday, disclosed that after carefully reviewing the recent development in the power sector, "we as stakeholders in the sector would not stand aloof while our only means of livelihood, which we have

laboured all through the years to build, collapses".

Sule said the leadership of the two unions in the zone had met and resolved to issue a 21-day ultimatum to the PHCN management to address Labour-related issues hampering the smooth operations of the sector.

He listed some of the union's demands to include non-absorption of over 10,000 current casual employees by the PHCN.

"While workers of federal agencies and organisations have been paid their monetisation benefits since 2003, PHCN employees are yet to enjoy same benefits despite several promises from the

management", Sule lamented.

On the payment of 150 per cent salary increase for the PHCN workers, the union leader said only 13 per cent of the money was paid to them till date while 137 per cent balance is yet to be given to them.

According to him: "If by May 17, 2010, the management remains adamant to our requests, all our members will stay at home".

Sule lamented that recent developments in the sector had made it clear to the workers that the government was only interested in the privatisation of PHCN without providing stable power supply for Nigerians.

Lagos pledges better funding for education