

...room, they told her that Nwodo said she should

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) gubernatorial aspirants in Akwa Ibom State, Mr. Frank Okon (left); Cross River State Governor, Senator Liyel Imoke and the Political and Legislative Adviser to Imoke, Mr. Edet Okon Asim shortly after being screened by the South-South gubernatorial screening committee in Port Harcourt.

One feared dead as ACN wins Ekiti Assembly bye-election

From Muyiwa Adeyemi (Head South West Bureau Ado Ekiti)

THE Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has declared the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) candidate Olajide

Olaniyi as the winner of the vacant Moba 1 Constituency seat.

The ACN candidate defeated candidates of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the Labour Party (LP) to sweep to victory in a by-election conducted on Wednesday to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of former Deputy Speaker Saliu Adeoti.

According to the result of the by-election announced by the Returning Officer, David Arabamen, in Otun-Ekiti, Olaniyi polled a total number of 4837 votes to win the seat.

The visit of Vice President Namadi Sambo to the state on Monday could not save the PDP candidate Gboye Afilaka from defeat as he could only garner 2568 votes.

The candidate fielded by former Governor Ayo Fayose's party, the LP, Babatunde Olayinka performed woefully as he only polled 239 votes. The constituency has 5 wards and 49 polling units.

Though violence ballot snatching and mass rigging

were recorded in some polling units during the poll but situation has since been brought under control by the police and other security agencies that monitored the by-election.

Meanwhile, one person was reported dead.

The deceased, whose identity could not be ascertained as at the time of filing this report, was feared killed in Otun Ekiti by an irate mob.

But the Resident Electoral Commission (REC) in the state, Alhaji Ishyaku Maigoro said the election was free and fair and assured those with complaints that the commission would listen to them and right any wrongs noticed at the poll.

No fewer than 15 gun-toting thugs were arrested by the convoy of the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Olayinka Balogun. Apart from Otun Ekiti, the headquarters of the local council, which was turned into a battlefield during the

election, violence also broke out in other towns such as Osan, Ira and Osun as supporters of the gladiators of the three political parties, which participated in the election, clashed.

A chieftain of the Labour Party (LP), Mr. Kola Oluwawole narrowly escaped being shot, but he lost N25,000 and a handset to a party hoodlums, who attacked him in Osan Ekiti ward.

Various stakeholders, aside from the members of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), accused the police and other security agencies of complicity in the violence that erupted in 49 units that make up the constituency.

Two former governors of the state, Chief Segun Oni and Mr. Ayodele Fayose; a Senator representing Ekiti North Senatorial District, Mr. Ayo Arise and a Labour Party chieftain, Chief Segun Akinwumi have urged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to cancel the elections.

Oni described the election as a shame to the nation while Fayose, who is also the LP leader in the state, described it as a sham and a moral burden on the neck of the preachers of one man, one vote.

Fayose urged the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mr. Hafiz Ringim to immediately redeploy the MOPOL Commander in the state, Mr. Etafe Erale, for the state to have peaceful elections, alleging that he was instrumental to the open rigging that dogged the conduct of the election.

Senator Arise scampered for safety and hurriedly left the election scene and returned to his country home in Oye Ekiti when thugs allegedly dressed in police uniforms attempted to attack him.

But the Chairman of ACN in the state, Chief Jide Awe denied the allegations, saying the atmosphere became charged following alleged spirited attempts made by Senator Arise to rig election in Osan and Osun.

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