

Two feared killed in Kano council poll violence

From Murtala Mohammed Kano

TWO persons including a woman were reported killed yesterday during the conduct of local government election in Kano. The woman died of stray bullet discharged allegedly by a policeman in Kiru Local Council.

Suspected hooligans also invaded one of the polling units in Kunchi and carted away electoral materials.

The official vehicle convening reporters of the *African Independent Television* (AIT) was also damaged while covering the election in the metropolis just as APC is reportedly maintaining early lead.

The woman identified as Halima was allegedly hit by police bullet at Kafimayaki Ward in Kiru Local Government, about 40 kilometers away from the metropolis.

The Guardian gathered from an eyewitness that trouble broke out when a team of policemen at the polling station attempted to disperse suspected political thugs who were assembling at the ward. A fracas thus broke out forcing the policemen to fire tear gas and allegedly live ammunition ostensibly into the air. In the ensuing melee, several voters ran for cover, with many sustaining varying degrees of injury.

At Shuwaki Ward in Tudunwada Local Government area, members of All Progressives Congress and that of Peoples Democratic Party were en-

• APC in early lead, PDP flays election

gaged in clashes leaving one person dead with many sustaining injuries.

In response to *The Guardian* inquiry, a text message sent by Ada Bisong, AIT reporter, alleged that some APC supporters attacked its press crew and damaged their official vehicle.

In her short text message: "The LG elections in Kano have been characterised by several electoral inconsistencies and violence. In Nasarawa LG at Gama ward, some APC supporters assaulted AIT crew and destroyed its branded vehicle."

Efforts to speak with the Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Magagi Muas Magiya and chairman of Kano State Independent Electoral Commission KANSIEC to confirm the deaths were not successful.

Meanwhile, voters at many polling units visited complained of late arrival of electoral materials. As at 10 a.m. in the morning all the polling units in Municipal, Kunbotso, Gwale, Fagge, Dala and Ungogo all in the metropolis, electoral officers did not report to their duty posts despite the high turn out of voters.

According to the electoral body, accreditation was supposed to commence between 8 a.m. and 12 noon after which voting was ex-

pected to kick off and end by 3 p.m.

However, APC is reportedly leading in many local government areas as at the time of filing this report. Meanwhile, the PDP has condemned the Saturday elections, insisting that there was no evidence to prove

election take place in major wards in the state.

The party also alleged APC of deploying thugs to intimidate its supporters.

A statement issued by the Publicity Secretary of the state caretaker committee Musa Ilyasu Kwankwaso contended, "It is obvious that in several local government areas no election took place since no electoral ma-

terials and officials were available."

Kwankwaso hinted that the Kano State Independent Electoral Commission refused to make electoral materials available in due time and where available, they arrived late deliberately, to short change supporters of PDP in Kano.

"We the PDP have ample evidence that where ballot box-

es were supposedly provided, they were very much short of the number provided for the polling units, which made it impossible to accommodate our voters and on top of that no voters' register was provided.

PDP affirmed that it would take extra mile to seek justice and thereby urged its supporters to remain calm and maintain law and order.



A Serbian rescuer carries an elderly woman out of a flooded house at Obrez village, near the central Serbian town of Varvarin, south of Belgrade, at the weekend. Deadly floods across Bosnia and Serbia have claimed at least 14 lives and led to the evacuation of 15,000 people after the Balkans suffered its heaviest rainfall in a century.