

PDP: Confusion, Violence Trail State Congresses

By Our Reporters

Confusion and violence greeted the state congresses of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Thursday, from Nasarawa to Edo; across to Oyo, where the exercise was conducted in defiance of a court order.

Agitation over the imposition of candidates in Lafia, Obi, Akwanga, Awe, and Keana Councils in Nasarawa State led to the death of two people. Eleven others received gun shot wounds.

Congresses in Lafia, Obi and Keana Councils were suspended.

Thousands of youths in the state and other party supporters from the aggrieved councils had on Wednesday stormed the PDP secretariat in Lafia to register their dis-

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Alarm Over Adulterated Fuel In Lagos – A8

pleasure over the way the congresses were conducted.

Some alleged that Deputy Governor, John Michael Abdul,

hijacked the party machinery for his interest, and that he tried

to impose his cousin, former Akwanga Council Chairman, Stanley Buba, on the people.

Parallel congresses were held in Enugu State, linked to the political skirmish between Governor Sullivan Chime and his predecessor, Chimaroke Nnamani.

Former PDP National Auditor, Ray Nnaji, emerged as state Chairman from the congress held by the

Continues on A2

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Continued from A1

Nnamani camp presided over by the Chairman of the National Secretariat Congress Committee, Mohammed Inusa.

Through affirmation, Vita Abba, a relatively unknown politician from Nsukka, was elected state Chairman from the congress conducted by the Chime faction.

Officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) witnessed the two events.

Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu; Deputy Governor, Sunday Onyebuchi; Senator Ayogu Eze; state Assembly Speaker, Eugene Odo; and other state and federal lawmakers attended the congress held by the Chime faction.

Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Culture, Tourism and National Orientation, Yisa Braimoh (PDP, Edo North), also confirmed that there was a par-

allel congress which held at the Ogbé Stadium at the behest of Governor Oseniemi Osunbor.

But he declined to comment on it, saying he did not want to dignify a non-issue.

Braimoh applauded the statesmanship and neutrality demonstrated by former PDP

More Stories On A9

Board of Trustees (BOT) Chairman, Tony Anenih, during the congress in Benin, which produced Dan Orbih as the state Chairman.

Governor Adebayo Alao-Akala of Oyo State described as "expired politicians" former Justice Minister, Richard Akinjide; former Power and Steel Minister, Wole Oyelese; as well as Yekeen Adejo; Lekan Balogun; and other aggrieved leaders of the PDP in the state.

Alao-Akala was speaking at the state congress of the PDP, which held in Ibadan despite a court order stopping the exercise.

In Lagos, a former member of the House of Representatives, Ketongi Koshedo, was unanimously elected state party Chairman.

He emerged with other members in the state Central Working Committee who were all returned unopposed as consensus candidates. Among them were the Secretary, Tunde Salau, and Youth Leader, Jide Oladeinde.

The congress in Osun State was peaceful. Most of the executive officers were returned unopposed.

Ademola Razaq was re-elected as Chairman, Sunday Ojo-Williams (Deputy Chair-

man), and Yinka Adejo (Secretary).

A 29-man consensus executive was raised at the Delta State congress, to end the crisis and factionalisation of the party in the state.

Peter Nwoboshi was elected Chairman, Ighoyota Amori (Deputy Chairman), and Solomon Ogba (Secretary).

But there was confusion in Bayelsa State, where a faction elected a new executive to run the party affairs.

In the executive of 30 members, led by Rufus Abadi, only the Deputy Chairman in the former executive retained his post.

The election was against the decision taken earlier at the state caucus meeting in Yenagoa, chaired by Vice President, Goodluck Jonathan, which resolved to retain the officials for another two years.