

News

2011 ELECTIONS

One killed, two lawmakers arrested in Ekiti

By Yaqoub Popoola
Correspondent, Ado-Ekiti

TWO MEMBERS of the Ekiti State House of Assembly were arrested by security operatives on Tuesday for various electoral offences.

The lawmakers, who belong to different political parties, were reportedly arrested at different locations during the state and National Assembly elections that took place under a relatively peaceful atmosphere.

One of them (name withheld), an indigene of Ado-Ekiti, was being held by anti-riot policemen in front of the popular Golf Club of Ado-Ekiti, Ijan Road, at the time of going press on Tuesday.

One person was reportedly shot dead in Iludun-Ekiti, Ilejemeje Local Government area, while five others were arrested in pre-election violence in the area allegedly involving supporters of the ruling Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) and the rival Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

A former chairman of Ilejemeje Local Government was alleged to have led a band of political thugs that shot and killed one Ojo Selewa at Iludun-Ekiti on Monday.

Personal Assistant to the former chairman, who is now in police custody, was alleged to have pulled the trigger. The incident had since been confirmed by the Ekiti State Police Public Relations

Officer (PPRO), Muhammed Jimoh.

In his comment after casting his vote at Ogilolo Polling Unit 009 in his native Isan-Ekiti in Oye Local Government, state Governor, Kayode Fayemi, described the exercise as an improvement over the previous ones.

He voted at exactly 12.30 p.m. alongside his wife, Bisi.

The Ekiti first couple had earlier been accredited at 11.35 a.m.

It took them less than two minutes to cast their ballots.

"Today's election is an improvement on the one held on April 16 and I believe that INEC is getting progressively better. Although, I don't want to speak more on the

election until voting is concluded. "All has been quiet even though there have been few skirmishes in Ido/Osi area' outside that, we have not heard any other thing so far.

"Apart from that, we heard that somebody was shot dead in Ilejemeje on Friday," Fayemi said.

PDP senatorial candidate for Ekiti North, Ayo Arise, also lamented alleged cases of harassment and snatching of ballot boxes by some political parties.

The Senator canvassed quick adoption of electronic voting, saying such would curb various irregularities being currently experienced in the country.

PDP scribe, Baraje, hails INEC over polls

By Dele Moses
Reporter, Ilorin

NATIONAL Secretary of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Abubakar Baraje, has hailed the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and security agencies over the conduct of this year's general elections.

Baraje gave the commendation just as he debunked allegations that his party induced voters with money to win elections.

He spoke on Tuesday at his family compound in Baboko area of Ilorin, Kwara State capital, in an interview with newsmen shortly after casting his vote.

He said fears that the elections would not be free and fair being entertained before the polls had been proved meaningless by the INEC because the electoral body was able to ensure that the elections were not only free and fair but also credible.

"When we started the series of election, we were very sceptical and many expressed apprehensions but with what we have seen now there was no need for that.

"The performance of INEC has been very wonderful compared to its performance in the past.

"Even the international observers have made their opinion known that INEC has performed wonderfully well. It is the same with PDP. We are very pleased.

"All actions by the opposition to malign INEC, to create a problem where none exists are already being debunked not by the PDP but by very transparent observers from all over the world," Baraje said.

The PDP scribe debunked allegations that his party secured its victory at the poll by inducing voters with money, saying the party did not engage in such practice.

He said it was because the opposition have not learnt how to lose gallantly that elections are



Nigerians queuing up to cast their votes in Ijede, Lagos State, during the governorship and House of Assembly elections on Tuesday. Photo: Felix