

Anambra State witnessed unprecedented election violence last week as there was free flow of blood in some of the local government areas. This was aside the brigandage that has come to be the norm in the state elections.

More pronounced was the situation at Ihiala Local Government Area, where two political moneybags, Ifeanyi Ubah and Ernest Obiejesi engaged each other in a brawl that claimed the lives of two police men.

Although, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Uche Ezech, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), said he was not aware of the situation, the affected officers whose identities could not be verified were posted to the chieftains from Abuja.

The Nation gathered that the matter has seen been taken over by the force Criminal and Investigation's Department (CID).

Guns boomed during the battle between the two oil moguls, who ironically worked for President Goodluck Jonathan during the election which could best be described as a charade in the state.

The trouble however began after both men had successfully delivered the state for the president, and Obiejesi wanted his APGA candidate declared winner for House of Representatives seat for Ihiala. Ubah was however adamant, insisting that his own PDP candidate must be declared.

Security operatives led by the Anambra State Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bashiru Makama stormed Ihiala headquarters to make the peace. But two police officers, from Mopol and Special Patrol Unit (SPU) attached to the two politicians had already been shot.

They were rushed to a hospital, where they unfortunately gave up the ghosts.

It will be recalled that in 1983, when a policeman attached to the former political bulldozer in old the Imo State, Late. Dr. Kenneth Ozumba Mbadiwe was killed; the great Arondizogu politician was prosecuted. The people of Anambra State have therefore started calling for the prosecution of the two oil magnates, for their complicity in the tragedy.

Nnewi too

The mayhem was not limited to Ihiala, as the same scenario almost repeated itself in Ukpok in Nnewi South Council Area.

Here, chairman of Vintage Communications Limited, Mr. Emeka

Bloody elections in Anambra

Although renowned for electoral brigandage, Anambra State has never in its history witnessed the level of election violence and bloodletting as perpetrated during the last presidential election. Nwanosike Onu, reports.



Moneme almost lost his life, as he was victim of a vicious attack by thugs, as he made to carry out his duty at the INEC collation centre.

According to Moneme, who was interviewed on his sick bed and in pains, he was trying to rescue INEC official who was being manhandled by the suspected thugs, when they swooped on him. "At about 4.00am in the early hours of Sunday, I went to Ukpok Nnewi South on a media work to find out why the result of the election held on Saturday had not been released. On getting to the headquarters, I ran into Mr. Ikenna Mbazulike Amaechi in company of others molesting an INEC official. It was horrific.

"They removed his cap and were hitting him from right, left and centre, demanding for the result he came with and dragging his bag with him. This was in the full glare of so many

people."

"Seeing that Ikenna, whom I know was one of the molesters, I said this man cannot be such a rascal and I approached them. At this point, the INEC man ran to me for protection and I obliged him by shielding him from further attacks.

But rather than abate, they became more aggressive, with Ikenna asking me: "What is your own?"

"I said you don't need to beat this man, if you have objection to what he is doing, you need to channel your objection to the appropriate authorities; but he replied 'How dare you?'"

"Before I knew it, he landed a blow on my left eye and told his colleagues to descend on me. Before I knew it, I was bloodied."

"I managed to escape from the hall and

across the gate where I managed to inform the police and made a report. So far, some of the culprits have been arrested. It is pathetic. This was a man who knows me very well, and has even been to this office. He knows I was there on official duties, but said he had to do what he did because I was trying to rescue an enemy."

Anambra State Police Public Relation's Officer, Uche Ezech, confirmed that some political thugs actually invaded Nnewi South INEC office to disorganise the day's proceeding, but were repelled by the police. He could however not confirm that anybody was beaten up by the thugs, adding that some of the thugs had been picked up by the police command.

Ezech also said that perpetrators of electoral violence would not go unpunished.

Horrific days for widows

But the most painful of all the attacks were carried out against widows in all the polling units in the state for supporting the All Progressives Congress (APC), presidential candidate, Gen. Mohammadu Buhari on the day.

According to the state coordinator of the widows, Hon. (Mrs.) Hope Nwandu, who was in pains for the lashing the widows received in the hands of security operatives led by PDP chieftains all over the state, the experience was horrifying.

Speaking with *The Nation* on Sunday, Nwandu said their sin was supporting Buhari and APC and wearing branded clothes of the presidential candidate before the election.

On the election day proper, the PDP bullies and their security operatives laid siege for the widows at the polling units and made sure they did not vote.

"We have over 100,000 widows in the state, we came out to vote on the day, but because of non-availability of materials and card-reader failure, the women in their different areas started making calls. When they noticed the widows, they descended heavily on us everywhere."

"They tore dresses of some of us, others sustained injuries; but we are today invoking the spirits of our husbands to descend on those who perpetrated that cowardly act on us. We can bear the pains now because APC won."

Another dead

As at the time of filing this report, unconfirmed report had it that one of those who sustained injuries during the mayhem at Ihiala and a son to an Adhoc staff of INEC, had died in an unknown hospital at Ihiala.

Dolling day fatal experience