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Five feared dead in Akwa Ibom, three in Rivers, two in C/River

Posted by: Kazeem Ibrahim,Clarice Azuatala,Nicholas Kalu in Featured, News 2 days ago

TRAGEDY struck yesterday as five persons were feared dead in Akwa Ibom, three were killed in separate incidents in Buguma, Asari Toru local government area of Rivers State while two others died in Cross River during the governorship and state house of assembly elections.

In Akwa Ibom, the killing occurred at Mbiabong Etoi, Shelter Afrique (Uyo); Ndiya in Nsit Ubium; Etim Ekpo, and Ini local government areas of the state.

As at the time of filing this report, the whereabouts of a reporter with one of the local tabloids, Radar newspaper, Mr. Aniedi Ukpoeang, was still unknown.

According to sources, Ukpoeang was said to have been abducted by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) thugs at Ekpeyong Ufum village, Odoro Ikot clan in Essien Udim LGA.

The Assistant Inspector General of Police, Baba Adisa Bolanta, could not confirm your killings but promised to call the Commissioner of Police in charge of Akwa Ibom State, Gabriel Achong, for confirmation.

Bolanta said: "I am not aware that five persons have been killed. Let me call the CP to find out."

The three deaths were recorded in Rivers, despite the claim by the State Police Command that it deployed about 17,000 police officers across the state for the election.

It was not possible to establish the identities of those who were killed, but it was gathered that one was a National Youth Service Corps member while the other one, perhaps an indigene of the place was beheaded.

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They were killed by suspected thugs while the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the house of one government official were burnt.

A man was also reportedly killed in Omagwa in Ikwerre LGA.

There was voter apathy in some areas, especially in Diobu axis of Port Harcourt.

Trouble also broke out in some communities in Gokana LGA like Bummu and Beera, where a team of heavily armed policemen rushed to quell before accreditation started in the area.

The state governor, Rotimi Amaechi, who voted at about 2.30 pm in his Ward 2, Unit 14 in Umuigwe, Ubima, Ikwerre LGA described yesterday's elections in Rivers State as a sham, alleging that INEC and security operatives worked in favour of the Peoples Democratic Party, (PDP) to the detriment of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

Amaechi said: "At least we have seen some result sheets. I hope they have not stolen the collation result sheet at INEC. All over the places, there were shootings. I had to stop at Omagwa to rescue people."

The governorship candidate of the APC, Dr. Dakuku Peterside also described the election as a sham, noting that elections did not take place in some LGAs like Ogbu/Egbema/Ndoni.

However, the governorship candidate of the PDP, Nyesom Wike, dismissed Amaechi's allegation even as he accused that the governor was using security operatives to harass him and his supporters at his father's house.

But the INEC National Commissioner in charge of Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Rivers states, Mrs. Thelma Iremiren issued a statement dismissing that as a rumour.

Iremiren said: "The Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC has received with dismay news that materials in the field are fake. Please, we wish to inform the public and Rivers people that no fake materials are in the field and as such, voters should go out and vote their leaders."

The two deaths recorded in Mkpani, Yakurr local government area of Cross River State occurred when thugs attempted to snatch election materials meant for Mkpani and Agoi wards in the area.

An eye-witness said: "No sooner had the election materials were distributed at about 8:00 am, at Government Secondary School, Mkpani that the incident occurred. Gun-wielding thugs moved swiftly towards the INEC officials in their car and hijacked some of the materials that were meant for distribution to polling units in the area.

"In the panic that ensued, the driver of the INEC vehicle reversed the vehicle into the residence of former governor of the state, Clement Ebri, for safety."

Reacting to the development, Hon. Willy Eteng, House of Assembly member for Yakurr 2 constituency, where Mkpani is, alleged that LP supporters hijacked electoral materials and fled into the house of former governor, Clement Ebri, who is a core supporter of LP.

"LP supporters carted away electoral materials but that will not election in the entire constituency as voting is still ongoing in other polling units," Eteng said.

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