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Violence, apathy mar A'lbom council polls

Posted By: [Bassey Anthony](#) On: December 3, 2017 In: [News](#)



- Hoodlums attack AKISIEC offices, police arrest two
- Enang, Ekere, independent monitors seek cancellation

Violence, voters' apathy and allegations of hijack of election materials characterised yesterday's local government election across the 31 local government areas of Akwa Ibom State.

No fewer than 30 hoodlums suspected to be cult members launched attacks on offices of the Akwa Ibom State Independent Electoral Commission (AKISIEC) in Uyo and Mkpato Enin local government areas, shooting sporadically.

Unconfirmed report indicated one person was feared dead and some persons injured when some youths suspected to be miscreants attacked the AKISIEC office in Uyo.

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The suspected hoodlums were said to be protesting against the non-release of sensitive materials to the opposition All Progressives Party (APC).

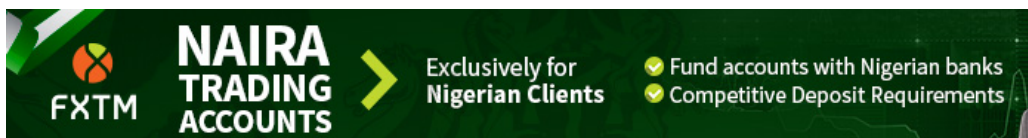
At least two persons were arrested by the police in Mkpato Enin local government area for allegedly causing trouble during the election.

Our correspondent observed election materials did not arrive at polling units until around 12 noon.

Voters, who turned up at various polling units, appeared frustrated as AKISIEC officials were not on ground for accreditation preparatory to commencement of actual voting.

An orgy of violence was reported in Mkpato Enin when some top government officials arrived the AKISIEC office.

Unconfirmed reports claimed that an APC chieftain at Ikot Ekpene (name withheld) was arrested for possessing firearms but the Police Public Relations Officer Bala Elkana denied the incident.



In Mbo Local government area, particularly in Ebughu Ward 1 and 2, hoodlums were said to have hijacked electoral materials.

Some youths were said to have blown off some ballots with gunfire.

On Friday, youths loyal to PDP, were said to have stopped people on the roads and snatched their voters' cards at home.

They were said to have arrested but released few minutes after following the intervention of a Commissioner in the state.

At Udung Uko, Peoples Democratic Party loyalists allegedly hijacked all the ballots.

The youths reportedly attacked passers-by and set many vehicles ablaze in the process.

As at 12noon, sensitive election materials were yet to arrive Urue Offiong/Oruko, Ikot Abasi and many other local government areas, particularly those of APC strongholds.

In Esit Ekit, thugs local to a political stalwart hijacked election materials.

The others believed to be loyal to other factions, were said to be regrouping for attack to get the materials.

Voting has started in Ibiono Ibom, Eastern Obolo. But in Ini LGA, some perceived fake police were said to be going about hijacking electoral materials.

Speaking on the conduct of election, the Special Assistant to President Muhammadu Buhari on National Assembly Matters (Senate), Senator Ita Solomon Enang, the Managing Director of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Nsima Ekere condemned the exercise, describing it as a sham.

Enang told reporters that he could not vote in ward 2, Ibiono Ibom local government (his ward) area because of lack of materials.

Ekere said there was no election, alleging AKISIEC in connivance with the PDP seized election materials.

He called for a cancellation of the election.

Election monitoring group, Coalition of Civil Societies in Nigeria, adjudged the local government elections in Akwa Ibom as a 'huge fraud'.

Head of the group, Alhaji Ali Abacha, called for the cancellation of the exercise, stating there was nothing like an election in the state.

However, the Publicity Secretary of PDP in the state, Ini Ememobong, said that the election was free and fair.

Ememobong said that APC did not prepare for the local government election as they could not even canvass for vote.