

# One killed as APC, SDP supporters clash ahead Ekiti governorship poll

By Rasaq Ibrahim, Ado-Ekiti    On Jun 12, 2022



One man lay dead at Itaji-Ekiti in Oye Local Government Area of Ekiti State yesterday in the aftermath of a clash between supporters of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) ahead of Saturday's governorship election in the state.

The victim was identified as Tope Ajayi, an APC member. Several others were injured, eye witnesses said.

The two parties had taken their campaigns to the sleepy town only for a confrontation to ensue between the supporters.

Both sides traded blames over the incident.

The Director, Media and Publicity of Biodun Oyebanji Campaign Organisation (the APC candidate), Chief Taiwo Olatunbosun, said the campaign in Ekiti North Senatorial District was proceeding orderly and peacefully until it was allegedly disrupted by hoodlums at the instigation of a former lawmaker in the area.

Olatunbosun said SDP thugs swooped on a faulty campaign vehicle of Biodun Oyebanji at Itaji, shooting at the occupants, including the deceased.

He said a vehicle belonging to the Special Adviser on Road Infrastructures to the Governor, Hon Rufus Adunmo, was similarly shot at.

He said the area had witnessed a spate of violence in the last one week, “including an attack on our campaign rally at Oke Ayedun on Friday, and now the brutal killing of our member today, and the maiming of many others who are now battling for their lives in the hospital.”

Olatunbosun commiserated with the family of the deceased and called on the security agencies in the state to investigate the incident thoroughly and ensure the perpetrators are brought to book, while he called on all APC members and the general public to go about their normal activities without fear.

However, the Director of Media and Publicity, Segun Oni Campaign Organisation, Jackson Adebayo, said the APC should be held liable for the violence.

He said: “We were at the palace at Itaji Ekiti where Asiwaju Segun Oni was meeting with the Obas in the local government area. Some people were outside the palace.

“Suddenly, we saw about five buses loaded with transporters who are being used as political thugs associated with the state government and the APC.

“They started shooting. We initially thought they were shooting to scare us away. People were running helter-skelter without knowing that they really targeted our members.

“They were also trying to force their way to where Engineer Segun Oni was maybe in an attempt to assassinate him. That was when they were repelled by security agencies, who came to the rescue and repelled them.

“But unfortunately, one of the thugs missed their vehicle because he fell down. We interrogated him and he said they were agents of APC. They left, we learnt one of them died later, but I would not know how.”

The Ekiti State Police Public Relations Officer, Sunday Abutu, confirmed the violence incident. But he said the Command had not been briefed on the number of casualties.

“Yes, there was a clash at Itaji between opposition party members. Investigation to unravel what transpired, the number of casualties and possible arrest of culprits has commenced.

“On the killing of a person, we are yet to get that confirmation. As soon as that is done, I will update the press,” he stated.