

One shot dead, others injured in Edo PDP rally



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PEOPLES Democratic Party (PDP) campaign in Edo Central Senatorial District began on a sad note yesterday with alleged killing of one person and the injury of others.

The sad incident happened at Ward 7 in Ewu community, Esan Central Local Government Area of Edo State, the party's campaign director Anselm Ojezua disclosed last night.

Ojezua said the incident had been reported to the police for thorough investigation.

On Tuesday, the PDP kicked off the campaigns for all its candidates in the senatorial district ahead of the elections billed for February 25 and March 11.

The violence led to confusion, as the Speaker of Edo House of Assembly, Marcus Onobun, who hails is from the area, and other PDP leaders from Edo zone were quickly evacuated. Other members of the party scampered to safety.

Ojezua, a former Commissioner for Lands and Survey, claimed an unnamed person was shot dead and many others were injured, thereby forcing PDP's leaders to suspend all political rallies in the area.

He said: "Expectedly, the outcome of the kick off of the campaign, which covered wards 1 to 5 of the LGA was indeed successful, as PDP members and supporters of the party came out en masse to show solidarity to all the candidates of PDP.

"With the same high spirit and in view of the success recorded at the kick off, the PDP leaders decided to take the campaign to Wards 7 and 8 in Ewu, but the campaign had a sad occurrence, because while the rally was ongoing in Ward 7, the sound of gunshots was heard some distance away from where the rally was taking place.

"Disturbed by this sound of gunshots, the leaders of the PDP leading the rally, which was supposed to be the final campaign rally in Esan Central Local Government Area decided to lead their members and supporters to a safe location, in order to avoid injury, and possible damage and loss of lives of leaders and members of the governing party.

"The PDP, as a peace-loving political party, which understands the place of the rule of law in a constitutional democracy, has reported the sad and unfortunate occurrence to the police, for a thorough investigation into the matter.

"We later heard of loss of life in the incident, which has led us, as a party, to put on hold all political campaign rallies, until the police come up with their investigation and findings."

The campaign's director also noted that the campaign council regretted the loss of life, resulting from the incident and prayed for the repose of the soul of the victim.

He urged all supporters of PDP to be assured that all campaign rallies would resume very soon, while awaiting the police's investigation, in order to ascertain the root cause of the incident.

Ojezua stated that the campaign's council admonished all PDP's members in the area to go about their normal activities peacefully.