

NEWS

Presidential polls: Seven arrested in Ekiti for electoral offences

From OLADELE
ADEDAYO, Ado-Ekiti

ELEVEN persons were yesterday arrested by the Ekiti State Police Command across the state for electoral offences during the conduct of the presidential election.

Three out of the suspected thugs were nabbed with two locally made pistol just as the arrest were made in Ado-Ekiti, the state capital and Ido/Osi local government area of the state.

The State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Mohammed Jimoh who confirmed this to newsmen said the suspects would be charged to court soon.

However, the turn out of voters during the poll was not too impressive across the state as there were few reports of skirmishes in few places like snatching of ballot boxes at St. Andrews primary school unit 5 and Oke Iyeba unit 6 at Usi-Ekiti in Ido/Osi local government area of the state.

Also, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) officials arrived early at the various polling units alongside election materials.

Soldiers who were strategically placed in some locations impounded vehicles and motor bike Speaking on the conduct of the election, the Minister of State, Federal

Capital Territory, Navy Capt. Caleb Olubolade said the electorate had been more enlightened on the conduct of election in the state.

According to him, I can really say that there is a lot of improvement on the part of our people as they are enlightened, anxious eager to cast their votes and also a great departure from the past.

Olubolade however attributed the development to the level of commitment of President Goodluck Jonathan's resolve towards having one man, one vote and that the votes of the people must count.

While the former Governor's of the state, Otunba Niya Adebayo and Mr. Segun Oni who spoke separately

regarding the conduct of the Presidential election lauded the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the security Agencies for ensuring peace and preventing violence during the polls.

Although, Oni noted that quite a good number of people's name were not found in the voter register.

He said that nothing should be taken for granted adding that security should be intensified during the April 26th elections.

The ex-governor however advocated the need to discipline political parties that fails to perform well in the ongoing elections saying their existence had been making INEC job more difficult by printing more ballot papers and other election material.



General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida casting his vote in Minna yesterday. With him is his youngest daughter, Halima. Photo: BALA BITRUS.

BOMB BLAST IN KADUNA

...2 dead, many injured

From ABDULL-AZEEZ
AHMED KADIR and
MUHAMMED IBRAHIM,
Kaduna

TWO lives were lost yesterday and many injured following an explosion of what is suspected to be a bomb at Happy Night Hotel in Kabala West, Kaduna South Local Government Area of

Kaduna State.

There was another explosion at Katsina Road, Kaduna late last night. The police are still carrying out investigation.

Confirming the explosion to *New Nigerian on Sunday*, the State

Director of the State Security Services (SSS) Mr. Abayomi Zamba and the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Ike Nwodi said there was actually an explosion and one person was arrested in connection with the blast.

While Zamba said he could not say much as of the time of filling this report, Nwodi said Anti-Bomb Police Squad were drafted to the scene. The Police he added were still accessing the situation and it was too early to have detailed information about the incident.

But in a telephone interview, the Command Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Aminu Lawal said there were two suspects in custody and they have launched an investigation into the situation to get to the bottom of it.

Residents of the Area said a middle aged man came around the Hotel and dropped a package but while walking away from the hotel someone raised an alarm few seconds before the explosion. People around rounded him up and handed him to the Police who saved him from been lynched by a mob action.

Many of the injured and the prime suspect were all taken to an undisclosed hospital for medical attention. Both the SSS and the Police refused to disclose the name or the location of the hospital for what they termed "security reason". The situation is however brought under control by the combine team of plain cloth and

uniformed security operatives.

Meanwhile, there were two separate explosions in Maiduguri yesterday at Abba Garam claiming two lives.

There were also sporadic shooting in the city while a

convoy of anti-bomb squad and mobile police were patrolling polling units.

Some hoodlums were said to have thrown a bomb at them. The impact shattered the windscreen of the rear vehicle. No casualty or injuries were reported at the time of going to press.

Four suspects were arrest by the police.

Security operatives avert crisis in Kaduna

From MIDAT B. JOSEPH,
Kaduna

IT TOOK the combined effort of Armed Military Men, Police as well as the State Security Service (SSS) yesterday in Kaduna to avert what could have resulted in

serious crisis following an internal clash of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) in Anguwan Muazu and Kabala West.

New Nigerian on Sunday gathered that trouble started in the two communities when CPC agents from Anguwan Muazu, a Muslim dominated area attempted to substitute their party's agents in Kabala West, a Christian dominated area, over a claim that the agent in Kabala West had connived to vote for President Goodluck Jonathan.

The resistance of the CPC agents to be substituted resulted in the clash among the party supporters.

Meanwhile, aggrieved youths in Romi New Extension, a suburb of Kaduna metropolis protested over non availability of polling unit in their community. The angry youths, who staged peaceful demonstration to press on their demands, said INEC and government deliberately planned to defranchise them.

Their spokesman, Mr. John

Presidential poll: 2 injured, INEC office torched in Misau

From MOHAMMED
KAWU, Bauchi.

TWO persons were injured at Misau and Darazo, headquarters of two Local government areas in Bauchi state while a section of the INEC office in Misau town was torched by youths who were protesting shortage of ballot papers.

The shortage of the ballot papers, our correspondent learnt, was also witnessed in some polling units in Katagum Local Government area.

Our correspondent who monitored the elections in some parts of the state gathered that violence protest sparked off in Misau when two INEC officials including a Youth Corps member were found with some booklets of ballot papers inside their pockets.

The protesters on discovering the hidden ballot papers with the INEC staff descended on them at the Sarkin Yakin polling unit which was adjacent to the palace of the Emir of Misau.

An eye witness told our correspondent that the angry protesters beat the corps before marching to the INEC

youths, as according to him, INEC has supplied enough electoral materials to polling units to forestall lapses.

The Electoral Commissioner explained that, what was supplied for the presidential election was far above what was supplied to the area for the NASS elections.

He said specifically that over 100,000 ballot papers were allocated to the area as against the 90,000 used for the NASS elections and called on people to always exercise patience and report any noticed lapses and or grievances to the appropriate authorities rather than taking the law into their hands.

The State Governor Isa Yuguda while reacting to the incident described what had happened in Misau as activities of criminals who wanted to disrupt the elections.

Yuguda also allegedly attributed the Misau incident to one person whom, he said, used town crier method during the last National Assembly

election to preach to people not to vote for a Christian candidate and was arrested with undertaking that he will not do it again.

"But unfortunately he did it again during presidential poll, it was the activities of criminals. For God sake how can you said INEC official must show you the number of ballot papers he had before the voting start, you should wait if you didn't get ballot paper to vote then you should complain according to the electoral law" Yuguda remarked.

He warned people against engaging in acts that will lead to the breach of peace in the state saying, God created Nigerians as Moslems and Christians and we must accept it as a divine act and tolerate each other.

Yuguda who expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the presidential elections in the state stated, "what we want is a leader who will lead this country to greatness not minding his religion."

Fashola calls for vigilance