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📅 10.Apr.2014 | DISQUS_COMMENTS | 👤 Yinka Oladoyinbo, Saliu Gbadamosi and Banji Aluko



THE ward congresses of the All Progressives Congress (APC), went awry in Ondo and Bauchi states, on Wednesday, as there were reports of skirmishes which degenerated into crisis and bloodshed in some of the venues of the congresses.

One person was killed, while some others were injured in Ondo, as violence erupted at the ward congress held across the state.

Apart from this, many of the venues of the congress were disrupted, as political thugs were said to have

invaded the venues with dangerous weapons.

In Bauchi, the secretariat of the party on Gombe road was razed by some unknown arsonists, few hours to the commencement of the congress in the state.

In Edo State, thugs suspected to be aggrieved members of the party in Esan Central Local Government Area of the state burnt part of the building of a senatorial aspirant in the council, Theophilus Okoh, in Ibori village.

The ward congress of the party, held across the country on Saturday, was rescheduled in Ondo because of the bye-election in Ilaje/Ese-Odo federal constituency of the state.

Eyewitness told the Nigerian Tribune that members of the party had already gathered for the exercise at Ajipowo area, Ward II, Akure South Local Government Area when violence erupted.

The people were said to be waiting for the commencement of the voting process when some suspected thugs loyal to a faction of the party in the council invaded the venue on Ondo road and contested the manner of the conduct of the congress.

The development was said to have irked some other groups in the venue, following which the invaders brought out gun and started shooting.

The bullet was said to have hit one of the party members simply identified as Bosun on the head and he died on the spot.

The development was said to have caused pandemonium, as hundreds of members of the party that had thronged the venue scampered for safety, with the youth setting for counter-action.

Confirming the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Wole Ogodo, said the incident occurred during the congress and gave the name of the victim as Bosun Adegorola.

He, however, said the victim was rushed to the state specialist hospital, Akure where he was confirmed dead.

The police spokesperson added that three people were arrested in connection with the crime and had been handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for proper investigation.

Besides this, the ward congress of the party was marred with irregularities in many of the centres, as voting could not take place as of 5.00 p.m in some venues in Akure.

Meanwhile, a faction of the party boycotted the congress and dissociated themselves from it.

The major grouse of the members, including Mr Demola Ariyo, Chief Yemisi Aladesaye, Mr Olalekan Obolo and Soji Ehinlanwo, the governorship candidate of the party, was the marginalisation of members of legacy political parties that formed the APC.

In a statement signed by the aggrieved members, they said the leaders of the defunct Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) and Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) had consulted widely and decided to boycott the congress organised by what they called "a faction of ACN."

In another development, the secretariat of APC on Gombe road in Bauchi metropolis was, earlier on Wednesday morning, burnt down by unknown arsonists, few hours to the commencement of ward congress of the party in the state.

The fire incident, the Nigerian Tribune gathered, occurred at about 2.00 a.m, while the hoodlums looted office equipment and other materials before setting it on fire.

According to a party source, who pleaded not to be named, there was a suspicion by members that the office was set on fire by thugs loyal to a faction of the party in the state.

The source informed that there were two factions in the state, adding that the two persons among those aspiring to become the state chairman of the party were leading each of the factions.

Efforts to get the state interim chairman, Senator Mohammed Mohammed, to comment on the incident failed, as he neither pick calls put through to him nor reply a text message sent to his mobile phone.

However, the spokesman of the party in the state, Alhaji Bappah Tafida, said the fire incident was caused by those he referred to as "desperate politicians."

The police in the state, however, said no life was lost in the incident, adding that the cost of the property destroyed in the inferno was yet to be ascertained.

The state PPRO, Mohammed Haruna, in a statement he made available to journalists, said " information at our disposal indicates that unknown hoodlums burnt down part of Bauchi council secretariat of APC."

Meanwhile, the congress was characterised by late arrivals of election materials across the state.

The exercise, scheduled to commence by 10.00 a.m with accreditation of voters, did not start until late in the afternoon in many

of the 20 local government areas of the state, while confusion trailed the exercise in some wards in Bauchi Local Government Area.

A day after the conduct of ward congresses of APC in Edo State, thugs suspected to be aggrieved members of the party in Esan Central Local Government Area of the state burnt part of building of a senatorial aspirant in the council, Okoh, in Ibori village.

The attack, which many described as a reprisal for the defeat suffered the previous day during the APC congress, was reportedly carried out at about 2.30 a.m by the suspected arsonists who came in a Hilux bus and an SUV.

An eyewitness, Ololo Okoeki, said he saw two vehicles moving in the direction of Okoh's house at 2.00 a.m, adding that he got a call minutes after that Okoh's building had been set ablaze.

Okoh, who declined comment, said "for those who think they can achieve anything through violence, let's see how far they can go."

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Sammynnadi • 12 hours ago

This is the beginning of APC democracy. Violence party for violent people. For those clamoring for APC, get ready for the dividend that come with it. APC is a bomb waiting to explode.

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