

Tragedies, violence, crimes hallmark presidential, NASS elections

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MANY people including kids and pregnant women suffered different degrees of tragedy during incidents that marked Saturday's presidential and National Assembly elections held across the states of the federation.

Two killed in Ebonyi

Two persons were reportedly killed while three others were injured in Amagu Ward One of Ndiagwu/Amagu community in Ikwo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State on Saturday.

The state police commissioner, Awosola Awotunde, confirmed the incident to *Premium Times*. The violence, it was learnt, started late on Friday night.

Awotunde said the incident followed a clash between supporters of two political parties in the state.

Although he did not mention the parties, there have been clashes between the All Progressives Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) supporters in the South-Eastern state of recent.

The lawmaker representing, Ikwo/Ezza South Constituency and candidate of the PDP, Lazarus Ogbe, accused the APC in the state of mas-

terming the attacks.

The APC candidate for the constituency, Chinedu Ogar, hails from the ward where the incident happened.

Ogbe said one of those killed was his agent for the polling unit in the area, giving the names of those killed as Igwe Ukwa and Egbe Oruke, while those injured were said to be Ejike Simon, Igwe and Alo Nwamgbho.

The lawmaker also alleged that polling materials for the ward had been hijacked.

He, however, said a report of the hijack was made to INEC, but his allegations could not be independently verified at press time.

Spokesman of INEC in the state, Andy Ezeani, said the security situation in the state was adequate.

Pressed on whether voting was going on in Amagu, he said "I think so. I will have to talk to my people on ground and get back to you."

He was yet to do so at press time.

Meanwhile, no fewer than five commissioners of police were deployed in the state for the elections.

The state Commissioner for Border Peace and Internal Security, Dr. Kenneth Ugabala, gave the information to journalists in his Okoffia polling unit, Ezza South Local Government Area of the state after casting his vote.

One killed in Zamfara

Bandits also reportedly

killed a politician in Zamfara State, few hours before voting began on Saturday.

The tragedy occurred in Yandoto town, Tsafe Local Government Area of the state.

The police identified the victim as Yusuf Agege, who was the chairman of the ruling APC in Yandoto Ward.

Police spokesperson in the state, Mohammad Shehu, told *Premium Times* that the attackers invaded the residence of the victim around 1:30 a.m. and killed him.

He said the police commissioner, Mr. Celestine Okoye, who was in the area on tour, had ordered an investigation of the murder.

"The police will fish out the perpetrators of the attack and bring them to face the wrath of the law," he said, while however refuting reported killing of a polling official and abduction of some voters on queue in Yandoto Ward," he said.

The chairman of the local government, Musa Tsafe, said the police would investigate the incident and bring the culprits to book.

Security agents arrest APC chieftain, Nabena

The immediate-past National Secretary of the APC, Yekini Nabena, was arrested during the elections for alleged possession of illegal fire arms.

Nabena was arrested on Saturday in Odi, Kolokuma/

Opokuma Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, while on his way to his community, Trofani in Sagbama Local Government Area of the state.

However, an eyewitness account had it that the APC chieftain was undergoing interrogation before the security operatives received a phone call, allegedly from Abuja, requesting them to set him free.

According to the eyewitness, the development sparked a mild protest by some residents of Odi who insisted that Nabena, a strong ally of Chief Timipre Sylva, be made to face the law.

Governor accuses Army of collusion with APC thugs

Meanwhile, Bayelsa State governor, Honourable Seriake Dickson, expressed sadness over alleged collusion of security agencies, particularly the Army, with APC chieftains and thugs to unleash mayhem on members of the PDP in the elections.

A statement by his Special Adviser on Media Relations, Fidelis Soriwei, said the governor stated this shortly after voting at Ererewari Polling Unit 5, at Toru Orua in Sagbama Local Government Area.

Dickson, who accused former governor of the state, Sylva; one Kodjo Sam and his cohorts of leading the attack, queried why security agencies were being partial in carrying out the presidential

order to deal decisively with those who commit infractions during the elections.

The governor who voted alongside his wife, Rachel, at about 10 O'clock in the morning, said the security agencies provided cover for leaders of the APC to carry out their nefarious acts in parts of the state, including Bassambiri in Nembe Local Government Area and Oporoma in Southern Ijaw area.

According to Governor Dickson, reports reached him that Nabena was arrested with weapons at Odi, but he was later released after calls were made, describing the situation as sad and calling on "genuine security agent" to rise up to the occasion by protecting innocent voters.

2 arrested for possession of 42 PVCs

Two persons were, on Saturday, caught with 42 permanent voter cards (PVCs) in Gbamjinba, headquarters of Guma Local Government Area of Benue State.

The two were found trying to find their way to the voting arena when they were caught by security men at the voting centre.

The voting centre, located at Gbamjinba Secondary School, has 10 polling units.

One of the ad-hoc staff said of the 14 polling units at Nzorov Ward, 10 were moved to Gbamjinba Secondary School so as to allow displaced persons to exercise their voting

rights.

The state governor, Samuel Ortom, who voted in one of the polling units, expressed concern at the technical hitches in some polling units in his home town, saying he reported that the card reader in two polling units in Nzorov Ward were not working.

South-South, South-East record lowest early poll opening —NCS

An interim situation report by the Nigeria Civil Society (NCS) on Saturday's presidential and National Assembly elections says the South-South and the South-East states witnessed the poorest amount of poll opening across the country.

In the report signed by NCS convener and renowned activist and constitutional lawyer, Clement Nwankwo, who is the Executive Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, about 27 per cent of the polling units in the South-East had opened as of 10:00 a.m. on Saturday.

The report, which quoted one of the NCS partners, YIAGA Africa, said the South-South recorded only 21 per cent, just as the average across the country was put at 45 per cent by 10:00 a.m.

According to the report, the late arrival of materials and ad-hoc staff accounted for much of the delay in polls opening across the country, with voting commencing around 11:00 a.m.

Explosions rock Borno. Yobe