

Ondo Election: Jonathan Warns Politicians Against Thuggery

from FOLORUNSO OJO,
AKURE

President Goodluck Jonathan has warned political parties and politicians taking part in the forthcoming governorship election in Ondo State to shelve the idea of using political thugs to rig or disrupt the election.

The President handed down the warning yesterday in Akure at the final State rally of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) for the flag bearer of the party, Chief Olusola Oke, and his Deputy, Hon. Saka Lawal, in the October 20 election.

He said that the Federal Government

would not allow any thug to come out that day as there would be full security patrol by both the Nigerian Police and the Nigeria Armed Forces to forestall any act by thugs.

His words: "They can go to anywhere to bring thugs; the Federal Government will not allow them to come out that day or to operate. Nobody will allow thugs. Parents, take care of your wards; do not allow them to be used as thugs as anybody caught in the act of thuggery will be severely dealt with by the Federal Government."

President Jonathan said that the commitment of the Federal Government in Nigeria now is to be rated high as one of the nations that would select their leaders in a democratic way that is free from election malpractices.

He said his government is fully committed to free and fair elections and the 'one man, one vote' syndrome.

The President described Ondo State as one of the luckiest states in the federation because according to him, the state is good for farming and there is oil in the state, which is the major source of the nation's economy.

The President therefore enjoined the people of Ondo State to join the mainstream by voting PDP to power come October 20, so that the state would benefit more, especially the farmers in the Federal Government's agricultural programme.

Jonathan thanked the people of the state for their tremendous support for the party's flag bearer, Chief Olusola Oke, and the PDP in the state.

Party chieftains that graced the occasion included Vice President Alhaji Namadi Sambo; Senate President David Mark; National Chairman of the PDP, Alhaji Bamanga Tukur; Vice Chairman, South-West, Engr. Segun Oni; National Secretary of the party, Olagunsoye Oyinlola and all members of the National Working committee of the party.

Others were former governor Olusegun Agagu; former Senator Bode Olajumoke; former minister for Housing and Urban Development, Chief Mrs. Mobolaji Osomo; National Women Leader of the party, Kema Chikwe; former Senator Omololu Meroy; Ambassador Omolade Oluwaturu, who is also the former deputy governor of the state among others.

NCC Builds Emergency Communication Centre In Awka As Pilot Station

from TONY ORAEKI,
Awka

The Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Communications, Hon. Oyetunde Ojo and other nine members of the committee who stormed Anambra State yesterday on an oversight tour of Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), have called for the establishment of the Emergency Communication Centre in Awka, the state capital.

The Chairman expressed satisfaction with the facilities at the Emergency Communication Centre in the state, just as he disclosed that Awka and Minna are the pilot stations while other 18 locations are in Enugu, Owerri, Lagos, among others.

Hon. Ojo commended the efforts of Anambra State, saying it has the capacity to disseminate information to agencies in times of distress in the state.

According to him, the NCC initiative is good in terms of emergency, hoping that response agents would work in cooperation to improve activities of the centre.

"We are impressed with the facilities at the call centers. Though not commissioned yet, the systems there were working even though the staffs have gone for training.

"We have seen the borehole and they have done like 80 per cent and they have to do more on the 20 per cent to keep it ready because the earlier the better.

"The only fear and challenges is that this being for

security, we need to be more security conscious, when you have such an infrastructure knowing what is going on presently in the country, the building has to be protected," he said.

Ojo expressed hope that by December, the infrastructure would be put to maximum use, adding that "Our visit is to make sure that NCC is living up to expectation."

Earlier, the Director, Public Affairs of NCC, Mr. Tony Ojubo, explained that the concept of the ECC is to assist in issues of emergency, especially helping states to tackle problems of insecurity, fire outbreak, accidents and robberies.

He recalled that a private bill had been proposed, which is yet to reach the National Assembly.

"I am sure that when they finish working on the private bill, it will go to the National Assembly and probably there will be some consultations involving all the stakeholders to make their inputs," he said.

Giving details, on the operational method, Ojubo disclosed that the emergency call number is 112, which is toll free and configured to link all GSM service providers in the country.

He added, "When people dial 112, it comes to the centre and depending on the nature of the emergency, if accident or fire, the agents at the centre will pass on the information to the particular government agency."

"If it is fire, they will pass it on to the fire service. If it is crime, they pass it on to the

police and if it is an accident, they pass it on to the ambulance."

"Depending on the location of that particular incident, they will call their agency in that particular council area, town, or city where the particular emergency arose from. The people will now go and address the issue," he added.

Ojubo further stressed that the Awka and Mubi centers are two pilot stations that will be used to identify whatever challenges and

lapses that exist in running the centers and correcting the other ones before they are finally commissioned.

Also speaking, the Senior Manager, Projects Department of NCC, Rita Emeka-Wachuku, assured that Awka centre has facilities for improved working condition and services to the public.

"All calls from the South East would be transferred to Awka, which serves as a database and has record keeping equipment," she said.

Three Under Age Children Drown In Shallow Well

by MAURICE
OKAFOR, Awka

Tragedy struck in Umuaga village, a serene community in Udi Local Government of Enugu State on at the weekend as three under age boys who were pupils of a primary school in the village got drowned in a shallow well in the community.

Though Sunday Pilot is yet to get the names of the pupils and their family background, information gathered from sources disclosed that two of the victims were of the same parents and the three of them are within the age bracket of eight and ten years.

The Sunday Pilot further gathered that the three kids, who were close friends, had after returning from school, went out to play as they usually do together. Unfortunately they were close to the well and they decided to take a peep inside it, prob-

ably to examine the level of water inside.

Sadly, one of them slipped off and landed inside the well. The remaining two, instead of screaming for help from adults, jumped into the well in an attempt to rescue their colleague. But the attempt turned out to be one of doom as two of them also got filled with water in the shallow well, before passersby noticed what had happened.

The Sunday Pilot was told that when they were eventually brought out from the well, life has gone out on them, even though there were moves to take them to the nearest hospital to know if they could still be resuscitated.

Attempts to areach the Enugu state Police Public Relations Officer PPRO, Mr. Ebere Amaraizu, to confirm the story before filing in this report was not successful.

Airhiavbere Ask Court Of Appeal For Different Elections Petitions Tribunal

by BYVICTOR
OSEHOB, Benin - City



Charles Airhiavbere

General Charles Airhiavbere (rtd) who is the PDP candidate in the July 14, 2012 governorship election in Edo State has asked the Court of Appeal to remit his petition to a tribunal differently constituted for hearing and determination.

Counsel to the General, Chief Efe Akpofure (SAN), in the appeal now before the Court of Appeal, says that this is the second prayer of his client who is dissatisfied with the tribunal's ruling and has appealed on 17 grounds with particulars detailing where it erred in law.

The first prayer he said, is for an order of the court of appeal setting aside the ruling of the tribunal except the part stating that ground of corrupt practices and non-compliance with the Electoral Act 201 (as amended) contained in paragraph 8 of the petition is competent having being in substantial compliance with Section 138 (1) (b) of the

Electoral Act 2010 (as amended) and the decision refusing to strike out the 4th and 5th respondents from the petition.

Airhiavbere is challenging the declaration by INEC that Governor Adams Oshiomhole of the Action Congress of Nigeria candidate won the July 14, 2012 elections in Edo state among many grounds that the governor was not qualified on the basis of his academic qualifications to contest the office of governor.

But on 27th September 2012 the tribunal ruled that lacks relevant jurisdiction to adjudicate on the academic qualification of the Edo State

Governor, Adams Oshiomhole which qualified him to contest the July 12, 2012 election in the state.

Chairman of the tribunal, Justice Suleiman Ambrusa, however said that the tribunal has jurisdiction to entertain the petition on the grounds of non-compliance with the Electoral Act 2010 as amended.

He said by bringing the petition challenging the Governor's academic qualification before the tribunal instead of the Federal High Court, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) governorship candidate, General Charles Airhiavbere, embarked on a wild goose chase.

In addition the Judge said that the petitioner should have contested the non-qualification of the Governor in the regular court before the conduct of the election, noting that the Electoral Act 2010 as amended mandated parties in an election to challenge alleged false documents of candidates before the election.

Airhiavbere's first ground of appeal Akpofure said is that the tribunal erred in law when they held that the answer to the issue of whether the tribunal has jurisdiction to hear and determine the application of the governor, the ACN and the INEC as 1st, 3rd and 5th respondents respectively, before the hearing of the petition was provided by the petitioner through the case of PDP vs. INEC.