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## Rivers APC members shot as Buhari begins campaign

JANUARY 7, 2015 BY CHUKWUDI AKASIKE 186 COMMENTS

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• Some injured All Progressives Congress members on their way to the hospital in Port Harcourt, Rivers State... on Tuesday.

| credits: Sahara Reporters

AT least, one person was feared killed and many others seriously injured when armed youths shot at vehicles conveying supporters of the All Progressives Congress from Asari-Toru and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State to the inaugural presidential campaign of Maj. Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (retd.).

The attacks were said to have occurred at the same time (5.30am) as the party faithful made their way to the Adokiye Amasiemaka Stadium in Omagwa, Ikwerre Local Government Area.

It was learnt that nobody died in the attack by armed youths said to be thugs working for the Peoples Democratic Party along the Bori-Saakpenwa Road in Bori, Khana LGA.

An eyewitness, who spoke with *The PUNCH* on the telephone, accused a former militant leader of being behind the attacks on the APC supporters.

The ex-militant is a member of the PDP

from Gokana LGA.

A source said five of the victims who were shot in Bori were rushed to a hospital in Port Harcourt where some bullets were extracted from their bodies.

The APC Chairman in Ward Six, Khana LGA, Mr. Doole Adoonam, said the APC supporters were in a convoy of three buses when they ran into an ambush by some gunmen.

He said, "Seven people from my ward are lying critically ill in the hospital. They sustained gunshot wounds from the early morning attack along Bori-Saakpenwa Road.

"Those injured were APC faithful, who were on their way to attend the commencement of the campaign by the APC presidential candidate, in Port Harcourt.

"On approaching the Mile 30 axis of Bori Saakpenwa Road, some gunmen opened fire on two of our buses, injuring some of my party men and women. The attack was too spontaneous for the drivers to beat a retreat."

Explaining that it was God that spared the lives of the APC supporters, Adoonam added, "Two of my party faithful- a young lady and a young man- are in very critically condition. As we speak, I pray nothing happens to them.

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"But we are not deterred by the action of some hired marksmen. Ogoni know who they want and our vote must count this time. We are not new to arms struggle and they (gunmen) cannot intimidate us."

At the rally, Governor Rotimi Amaechi, accused the Peoples Democratic Party of being responsible for the attack on the APC supporters in Asari-Toru and Khana LGAs.

He condemned the shooting of the APC supporters, saying members of the PDP believed in guns while their APC counterparts believed in God and man.

"The fact that they shot you, brings to the fore, the argument we put forward that currently, the government in power cannot protect you and I. If the government could protect you and I, why were we shot at? Who bought guns for those people who shot at our members?"

"When we came, we addressed insecurity. In the past, we could not have had our rally here. We are gradually going back to that. I hear today(Tuesday) that members of the APC from Asari-Toru and Khana (Ogoni) LGAs were shot at on their way to this place.

"I thank God for this opportunity. I never knew I would be governor today, I am governor by the grace of God. I have stayed in office till 2015. By this time last year, the men who thought they were God, thought I would have been out of office.

"By this time last year, men had collected money to remove us from office, but the God we worship never allowed it to happen. Now, they are the people struggling. We told them there will be this time, when they will be looking for our votes.

"I want to thank all of you for accepting to make me your governor. I may not have been the best governor you have ever seen. I am not a perfect man at all, because I am human."

Amaechi, who explained that he never knew that he would be the governor of Rivers State, explained that those who wanted to remove him from office were currently struggling politically.

Also, Buhari identified insecurity, poor economy and corruption as the three major problems facing the country and promised to tackle them should he win next month's election.

Lamenting that the level of corruption in the country was intolerable, he said that the APC had gathered competent hands to manage the economy should he emerge the president of Nigeria.

The former Head of State therefore urged Nigerians to get their permanent voter cards, mobilise themselves and ensure that the end justified the means.

He said, "Let us make sure that our votes count. The problem we are facing today is the problem of security and economy. We have gathered competent hands to manage the economy and tackle insecurity.

"The level of corruption in Nigeria is intolerable and we will make sure we succeed in fighting corruption when we get there. I wish Nigerians the best of luck and we believe in one indivisible Nigeria.

"I appeal to you to mobilise yourselves to ensure that the end justifies the means. I also urge you to collect your PVC to enable you to vote in order to bring in the change we have been talking about."

He congratulated Amaechi for his ability to mobilise the people of the state and Nigerians for the task ahead.

Buhari said, "We congratulate the Governor of Rivers State profusely for being the Director-General of my presidential campaign organisation. I thank you very much for accepting the responsibility to work with our great the party.

"Amaechi has made enormous sacrifice. He earned it, he worked for it and I thank him for accepting it. He got it through a lot of hard work. The way Amaechi mobilises people shows that he is the right choice."

Some of the dignitaries on the presidential campaign train were the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Aminu Tambuwal, the Governor of Lagos State, Babatunde Fashola; his Ogun State counterpart, Ibikunle Amosun; the National Chairman of the APC, Chief John Odigie-Oyegun; a former FCT Minister, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, and an ex- PDP National Chairman, Chief Audu Ogbah.

Reacting to the incident in Asari-Toru Local Government Area, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Ahmad Mohammad, said investigation started immediately after complaint of attack on a bus conveying some persons to Port Harcourt was received.

However, the State Assistant Publicity Secretary of the PDP, Mr. Samuel Nwanosike, disagreed with Amaechi that the party was behind the attack on the APC supporters .



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#### Quote of the day

**"Mr. President, I want you to discuss with your governors, senators, members of the House of Representatives and other elected officials.**

**"We say that members of the PDP should not be used and dumped again. People leave the party because of lack of equity or injustice."**

*The National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party, Alhaji Adamu Mu'azu, coming hard on the political party, saying it was full of injustice.*