

# Two feared killed, many injured as violence mars Lagos council primaries

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Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu

Two persons were feared dead on Saturday as the local government primaries of the All Progressives Congress were fraught with violence in the Surulere area of Lagos.

The deceased, identified simply as Efue and Vincent, reportedly died of gunshots after thugs suspected to be cultists stormed Shamsideen Primary School (Ward E), Ojuelegba, where a primary election was taking place and shot indiscriminately.

Many others were said to have sustained injuries in the attack as violence spread to other wards in the council.

One of the aspirants, who spoke to one of our correspondents on condition of anonymity, blamed the violence on the desperate attempt of a popular politician in the area to impose his candidate who is vying for chairmanship ticket.

He said, "The politician disrupted the electoral process in the local government through his thugs. People were waiting patiently for the electoral officers to come in. Around 11am, his thugs came out. They were moving from one ward to another. They killed two people and injured a number of others. They were moving in their numbers trying to stop people from voting. As far as I am concerned, there was no election in Surulere."

A document made available to one of our correspondents showed that of the four aspirants vying for the councillorship position, only one of them, Ms. Barakat Bakare-Akande with number 0066, was successfully screened.

The others, who included Babatunde Thomas, Nurudeen Bello, were not cleared while Babatunde Ogunlana did not show up.

Some who were not happy with the emergence of Bakare-Akande immediately attempted to disrupt the exercise.

Their grouse, it was learnt, was based on the fact that another list showing that Babatunde Thomas was cleared had already been circulated. They, therefore, believed that there was foul play.

A fracas soon ensued which led to the death of two while another person was also severely wounded and was seen lying in a pool of blood.

An eyewitness said, "Immediately after the primary election, officials surfaced with the new list of cleared councillorship aspirants at the venue of the primary election at Shamsideen Primary School, Ojuelegba. The opposing and rival cult groups started engaging in confrontations that led to deaths of the members of the rival cult groups."

Meanwhile, the Progressive Youth Wing of the APC has condemned the violence in a statement on Saturday its spokesman, Ibrahim Alowonle.

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Alowonle said, "We strongly condemn the violence that erupted on May 29, 2021 in some areas of Surulere, Lagos, that has now resulted in at least two deaths and injuries to several residents."

A leading aspirant, Idris Aregbe, also issued a statement condemning the killing of three party loyalists, which he described as acts of wickedness and gross injustice at its peak while sympathising with the victims' families.

"I am lost for words right now, this can't be happening. I thought Nigerian politicians would have left things like this in the past. My heart goes out to the families of the three men who lost their lives in Surulere today.

“This is not the democracy we signed up for. Acts of wickedness like this should not be permitted in our democracy. We can do better than this. I am not happy right now. This is gross injustice at its peak.”

It was learnt that the police had already arrested some suspects.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, CSP Muyiwa Adejobi, said he would soon issue a statement on the matter.

“I have heard about it but I don’t have the facts. A statement will be issued soon,” he said.

He had however yet to do so as of the time of filing this report.