

to serve as president. track record of the in accountability and performance in Abia State is the asset. He is running presidency on merit and be supported on that

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at his newspaper *The* ost of those in its ent are Nigerians from es. Even in Govern- use there are several appointees who are not rate. I may not mention re but you can come to and see for yourself," ma told the gathering. esented posters and of the governor to the d asked them to carry ssage that the vision of or is on course.

PDP Thugs Burn House, Petrol Station

EMMA UNA/Calabar

Thugs suspected to be members of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have gone on the rampage, burning a house and a petrol station in Cross River State.

P.M.News investigations revealed that the incident happened in crisis prone Ugep in Yakurr Local Government Area of the state. It was gathered that the clash on Saturday involved loyalists of two political leaders in the area.

Sources said the supporters of Barrister Ewa Mkpang, former chairman of Yakurr Local Government Council, clashed

with the supporters of Barrister Bassey Ewa, the Speaker of the Cross River House of Assembly.

Machetes and other dangerous weapons were freely used to inflict severe cuts on one another.

Trouble, an eye witness told *P.M.News*, started when supporters of Ewa Mkpang, known as Yakurr Youth Vanguard, organised a rally to announce the intention of their boss to contest election into the State House of Assembly in 2007.

Mkpang's supporters were said to have rained invectives on the Speaker in one of the songs they sang during the rally. This infuriated supporters of the Speaker who allegedly invaded the venue of the rally and attempted to seized the video machine used to record the event.

Their attempt was fiercely resisted by supporters of Mkpang.

It was during the clash that some persons torched the house and filing station belonging to Ewa Mkpang. No lives were reported lost. However, residents have deserted the place for fear of more violent attack by supporters of Ewa Mkpang who regrouped on the night of Sunday to burn the house of the Speaker's

mother but were repelled by the Speaker's loyalists.

Yakkur has become notorious for political violence as politicians in the area, most of whom are in no mood for compromise, strategise for 2007 elections.

The Cross River State Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Thomas Opene, said the incident has been reported and a contingent of anti-riot police men would soon be deployed there.

Today In A. M. Newspapers

South Backs Obasanjo On Successor

The Southern Leaders Forum expressed support, yesterday, for President Olusegun Obasanjo endorsing his successor and that power must remain in the South at the expiration of his tenure next year.

However, the PDP splinter group has launched a fresh legal move to frustrate the Dr. Ahmadu Ali-led executive committee from organising any convention/congress ahead of the 2007 elections and to stop it from receiving any statutory subvention from