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2 feared dead as violence, irregularities mar APC LG congresses in Cross River

Judex Okoro, Calabar

The jostle for control of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Cross River State has continued unabated as two persons are feared dead following violence which erupted during the local government congresses in the state.

Investigations by Daily Sun revealed that the local government congresses schedule to hold on Tuesday were conducted on Wednesday, in the Central and Northern senatorial districts, due to late arrival of materials in those areas.



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It was learnt that while congresses in the South went on well, the congresses in the Central and Northern senatorial districts were marred by violence and alleged irregularities, leading to the alleged death of **two persons in Boki and Yakurr** just as election were postponed in those places.

Areas affected by irregularities include Yakurr, Obubra, Ikom, Etung, Boki and Ogoja local government areas.

Eyewitness, Nkim Ibor, said hoodlums, armed to the teeth and numbering over 20, stormed the congress venue in Ugep in Yakurr local government and shot sporadically into the air, apparently to scare the party members away and possibly cart away the congress materials.

The development created panic within the environment as people took to their heels for safety.

Ibor said: "Gunmen disrupted the exercise by shooting in the air, while some were shouting no congress. The hoodlums also attacked the police station opposite the venue of the exercise and threw stones at the police building, destroying doors and windows.

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Also speaking, Vice Chairman of APC Central, Mr. Cletus Obun, said: "I miraculously escaped assassination as our convoy carrying the congress materials was attacked at Nko, leaving about six people wounded and the police van damaged in the process."

Confirming the incident in Yakurr local government area, Chairman of the Congress Committee for the area, Mr. Owan Kenneth, said: "There was violence at venue of the congress. And because of the ugly incident, the organising committee of the congress, in the area, in consultation with the stakeholders of the party in the area, resolved to postpone the exercise and returned all materials to the state secretariat of the party, until a new date is fixed.

Expressing worry at the ugly development, APC Vice Chairman, South South, Mr. Hillard Etta, said: "It was a fierce battle in Yakurr, on Wednesday, during the chapter congresses. We had to postpone the congress to avoid loss of life. Besides, we are worried at the high level of irregularities which characterised the local government congresses. It is even more worrisome that four days after conducting ward congresses, list of officers elected are not yet published.

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N 5,581



N 5,463



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N 5,148



N 5,924



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"For the state congress coming up on Saturday, May 19, the story is the same, as the delegates' forms and lists are not yet out. So, we are lost as to what next to do. We call on the panel congress chairman to do the right thing for peace to reign in the state."

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