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## Rivers rerun: Police officers beheaded, 5 others missing

Posted on Dec 12 2016 - 2:30am by Emmanuel Masha

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The violence that characterised the legislative rerun election in Rivers State on Saturday has claimed the lives of some policemen. A senior police officer, DSP Alkali Mohammed of Mobile Police Unit 48, and his orderly were beheaded by



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unknown persons when they ran into an ambush at Ujju Community near Omoku in Onelga.

Three other policemen escaped while five others are missing. The police patrol vehicle, which was conveying the 10 policemen, was taken away with weapons by suspected hoodlums. Major General Kashimu Abdulkarim, the General Officer Commanding of the 6 Division disclosed this yesterday.

“The most brutal incidence occurred at Ujju Community near Omoku in Onelga where a police patrol team was ambushed. In the ambush, 10 policemen scampered into the bush.

“The Mobile Police organised a rescue mission. Regrettably, the team discovered that DSP Alkali Mohammed of Mobile Police Unit 48 was beheaded along with his orderly.

The patrol vehicle was taken away with weapons, three policemen escaped while five were missing in action,”

Abdulkarim disclosed. The Nigerian Army also rescued 16 members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) who were abducted during the polls.

According to the GOC, “In Abonema, there were three explosions that created bedlam. Subsequently, 11 NYSC members were abducted along with electoral materials.



However, 10 of them were rescued two hours later by the soldiers while one was rescued about eight hours later. “At Emouha, Mr. Oblewaremu abducted five NYSC members with election materials in a Sienna bus.

The corps members were rescued while the suspect was handed over to the police.” Maj-Gen. Abdulkarim dismissed the claims that soldiers carted away sensitive INEC materials during the polls.

He said: “The 6 Division, Nigerian Army remained apolitical in the conduct of the election. Its soldiers provided perimeter defence to ward off hoodlums and miscreants. “Nigerian Army troops were, in no way, involved in any form of ballot box snatching, neither were they involved in the escort of politicians as alleged.

“They acted swiftly in response to security breaches in order to enforce the law, provide aid to the Nigeria Police and other security agencies, especially in areas like Abonema, Etche, Gokhana, Ikwere, Eleme, Tai, Khana and Omoku, amongst others.

“Susceptibility of mentioned areas warranted providing security for the electoral officials, voters, international and local observers, in conjunction with other security agencies by soldiers for a peaceful election to thrive in the environment.



“These were areas where armed men engaged security personnel. In Gokhana, armed hoodlums engaged the soldiers providing outer perimeter defence for the electorate. Several shootings were recorded in some communities such as Bodo, the home town of the Secretary to the State Government, B-dere and Mogho in Gokhana LGA, including snatching of ballot boxes.”

Abdulkarim also denied claims that the army connived with some politicians to influence the outcome of the just-concluded legislative elections in the state.

“The allegation that soldiers carried out killings and mass arrest in Tai and Gokana Local Government Areas during the legislative rerun election is false. “In addition, the allegations made by some respected politicians regarding deep involvement of soldiers during the elections were aimed at tarnishing the positive image of the army.

“These people (politicians) allegedly accused soldiers of snatching ballot boxes, illegal escort of some politicians and arrest and detention of voters during the elections which is totally untrue.

“Members of the public should consider these weighty accusations that present soldiers in a negative manner as mere farce to garner public sympathy,” he said.



Meanwhile, some officers of the Nigerian Army and operatives of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) yesterday arrested some chieftains of the PDP.

The security operatives allegedly disrupted the announcement of result by INEC staff that did not favour the candidates of the APC. In Ikwerre Local Government Area, a team of police officers held the council's caretaker committee chairman, Samuel Nwanosike, other PDP chieftains and Electoral Officers hostage. Sources said that one CP David, who was in charge of the senatorial zone, led hundreds of police personnel in the operation.

In Emuoha Local Government Area, soldiers invaded the area and arrested John Wokoma, the caretaker committee chairman at the council secretariat, and whisked him away to an unknown destination. The Rivers State Government said that the operation was led by Col. Ali, acting on instructions from the Brigade Commander.

Sources said that before Wokoma's arrest, the soldiers had chased away the agents of the PDP. In Ahoada West Local Government Area, operatives of SARS in the company of a chieftain of the APC, shot sporadically and chased away all PDP agents at the collation centre for Ahoada West.

At the INEC office in Isiokpo in Ikwerre Local Government Area, soldiers and SARS operatives allegedly chased away



party agents, corps members, newsmen, and observers after using an Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) to block the entrance to the collation centre.

## Emmanuel Masha

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Shima Gyoh

[December 12, 2016 at 10:38 am](#) - [Reply](#)

What do proponents of State Government-controlled police say to this? The arguments are largely credible, but for a country with rational leaders whose patriotism is above the partisan. That is rare in Nigeria. In Nigeria, some politicians and state governors talk, behave and act like gang leaders with no scruples and without a modicum of patriotism or respect for human life. Give them control over forces more than their security details and wars will break up between many states, tribes and also between some states and the federal government.

The temptation of becoming billionaires, insulated from criminal convictions is so great that most leaders of political organisations are no longer interested in developing the country between elections. As soon as one election is over, they immediately start strategising for the next one, knowing that future ambitions it would uncover would break up existing alliances. They get busy with stirring up dissatisfaction and hatred for opponent parties and offering attractive regrouping benefits to encourage disloyalty. Destruction of the little infrastructure we have acquired is part of making sure that governing parties are seen as failures. As we can see, even by-elections have become major internecine wars and great strain on national unity. Democracy is NOT working in Nigeria! Radical changes we voted for have not happened. Beneficiaries of corruption are still in charge and they will not “democratically,” surrender their privileges, condemn themselves and voluntarily walk into prisons! Do we know where we would soon arrive if we continue the way are going?

