

Violence, ballot snatching, killings mar Kogi elections



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By



***Six killed, several others injured in Abocho, Ayetoro-Gbede**

*** As hoodlums, gunmen snatch ballot boxes**

*** Helicopter aides in ballot snatching in Lokoja**

Saturday's governorship and Kogi West Senatorial rerun elections in Kogi State were marred with violence, ballot box snatching, killings and burning of properties across the state.

New Telegraph learnt that six people were killed at different polling units and many others injured by gunmen and hoodlums, who stormed various voting centers, disrupting the process and carting away ballot boxes.

A building belonging to an All Progressives Congress (APC) chieftain was also set ablaze in Lokoja, the state capital, during the election.

At Lokongoma community in Lokoja Local Government Area, a helicopter was alleged to aided in the snatching of ballot papers.

The helicopter, was said to have descended as if it was going to land, thereby raising thick dust to scare electorates away, before the ballot boxes were carted away.

At Abocho community in Dekina Local Government Area, two persons reportedly lost their lives during the governorship election in Kogi State.

The deceased persons who are names were issued by the natives, as Umoru shuaib and Faruk Suleiman, died during gun battle between supporters of the ruling APC and main opposition party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Witnesses said the incident happened while voting was going at Barrack Polling Unit 001 in Dekina council.

It was learnt that the assailants from all indications, came for Umoru Shaibu, one of the victims in the attack.

“They came in a bus while voting was taking place and were wearing police uniforms, so we didn’t suspect anything.

“Umoru had voted and was chatting with Faruk close to the polling unit, when the bus drove by. None of the occupants who were in police uniforms alighted from the vehicle.

“We just heard gunshots and shouts from the victims as well as onlookers. The attackers then drove off,” a resident in the community, who identified himself as Michael Ochimamna, disclosed.

The major street in the ancient town was deserted when our correspondent visited the area.

Stones and sticks littered the road, while tyres earlier burnt by youths protesting the attack were still emitting smoke.

Three people were also reportedly killed in Adankolo in Lokoja, the state capital. They were killed in different polling units by hoodlums who shot sporadically while trying to cart away ballot boxes but were prevented by some electorate and residents in the community.

A voter was also killed in Ayetoro-Gbede in Ijumu Local Government Area and two other people shot at by hoodlums who disrupted the voting process at Ayetoro Town Hall in Ward 03 of the local government.

The hoodlums also snatched ballot boxes at Ayetoro Town Hall and Oke Ibukun in Ijumu Local Government Area. But the ballot boxes were later recovered.