

Benue APC Ward chair killed as violence rocks registration

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Revalidation exercise of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Benue State yesterday turned bloody as the party's ward chairman in Gboko South was killed by thugs.

The APC Ward Chairman, Hon. Peter Ahu, was said to have been murdered following a sharp disagreement between supporters who claimed loyalty to a member of the House of Representatives representing Gboko/Tarka Constituency at the Green Chamber of the National Assembly, Rt. Hon. John Dyegh and those of the Minister of Special Duties and Inter-governmental Affairs, Senator George Akume.

New Telegraph learnt that the crisis was because of supremacy tussle in the revalidation process.

Sources at the event told *New Telegraph* that Dyegh and his supporters

had earlier objected to the way the entire exercise was handled. They alleged that they were shortchanged and that the process was shrouded in secrecy and full of irregularities.

It was learnt that Akume's faction had discreetly forwarded a list it had reportedly compiled to the state secretariat of the APC for consideration as the authentic list which did not include names of members of the other faction.

Apparently miffed at what had happened, the Dyegh's group was also said to have taken its list to the APC. Both parties were advised to go back and harmonise the list and return it last Saturday but later shifted the submission date to yesterday.

When Dyegh's supporters noticed irregularities surrounding the exercise and insisted that the right thing must be done, protest ensued leading to the killing of the ward chairman.

Efforts to get Akume's

reaction or any of his close aides proved abortive.

But in a swift reaction, Dyegh condemned the killing and condoled with the family of the deceased.

The Police Command's Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Catherine Anene, confirmed the incident in a telephone interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN).

Anene said that preliminary investigation revealed that suspected hoodlums allegedly from a faction of the party in the council ward carried out the attack at the party's registration and revalidation training centre.

She said that the deceased and other party members were at the venue of the training for the registration and revalidation exercise when the hoodlums arrived.

According to the PPRO, the chairman was hit on the head with a wood by the hoodlums, he collapsed and was rushed to the hospital where he was confirmed dead.