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### 12 Killed as APC, PDP Supporters Clash in Taraba

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Senator Aisha Jummai Alhassan

By Wole Ayodele in Jalingo

No fewer than 12 people were on Sunday killed in Wukari, Taraba State, during a violent clash between supporters of All Progressives Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

The clash, which started late in the night last Saturday, was a fall out of the judgment of the State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal which declared Senator Aisha Jummai Alhassan as the duly elected governor of the state.

Besides, several people sustained varying degrees of injuries during the clash while properties worth millions of naira, including houses and vehicles, were destroyed.

Confirming the incident in a telephone interview with THISDAY, the State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Joseph Kwaji, said the situation had been brought under control by a combined team of police and soldiers drafted to the town.

Though he declined to disclose the number of casualty recorded in the crisis, an indigene of the town, Henry Audu, told THISDAY that at least twelve people were lost in the clash.

According to the PPRO, "The crisis started last Saturday night. Some APC supporters were going round celebrating the judgment of the tribunal and they had a clash with PDP supporters.

"The situation has been brought under control by the prompt intervention of the combined team of police and soldiers drafted to the town and normalcy has returned to the area. I can not give you the number of casualty now because investigations are still ongoing to ascertain the number."

But Audu, who also spoke to THISDAY on telephone, said 12 people were shot dead while the corpse of two others are yet to be found.

According to him, "The sound of sporadic gunshots rented the air at about 1a.m and later escalated to several parts of the town. At about 3.30 a.m., the gunshots subsided but resumed again at about 7a.m when people were preparing to go to church."

Similarly, the Managing Consultant of Nigeria Sunrise Newspaper, Danjuma Adamu, who was in Wukari, told journalists that though he did not know the cause of the crisis, he started hearing gunshots around 1a.m and did not stop till 12:noon when security men were able to bring the situation under control.

Danjuma, who also confirmed that there were casualties from the incident, however dispelled insinuations that the clashes has religious undertone, saying it basically a political issue.

The tribunal had last Saturday ousted Darius Dickson Ishaku as governor of the state and declared Aisha Alhassan as the winner of the April 11 gubernatorial election on the grounds that Ishaku was not validly nominated as candidate of PDP.

Ishaku has however enjoined the people of the state to remain calm and law abiding while he explore legitimate means to recover the mandate freely given to him by the people of the state.

Speaking through Sylvanus Giwa, his Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Ishaku urged the people of the state not to take laws into their own hands and remain peaceful, stressing that he has directed security agencies to deal with anybody or group that tries to breach the peace of the state.

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