

# Nine Feared Dead in Rivers APC Campaign Rally

● Polls will be free, fair, Buhari reassures ● Amaechi accuses Wike of negotiating with APC  
● Hold minister responsible for violence, Wike tells Nigerians

**Ernest Chinwo** in Port Harcourt

What started and ended as a colourful rally turned tragic as no fewer than nine persons were feared dead while four others were injured in a stampede at the pedestrian gate of the Adokiye

Amiesimaka Stadium, Igwuruta-Ali, Port Harcourt at the end of the presidential campaign rally of the All Progressives Congress (APC) yesterday.

This is coming as President Muhammadu Buhari yesterday reassured that he is all out for

free, fair and credible elections starting on Saturday.

This is coming as the Director General of Buhari re-election Campaign Organisation, Chibuike Amaechi, accused Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, of lobbying to be returned as governor for a second term.

In response to Amaechi's threat, Wike has called on Nigerians and the international community to hold the APC and the minister of transportation responsible for any outbreak of violence during the forthcoming elections.

The stampede occurred at the end of the rally when people were rushing out of the stadium through the pedestrian gate.

Some people fell to the ground and were trampled upon by other persons trying to exit from the gate.

The Police Public Relations Officer of the Police State

Command, Nnamdi Omoni (DSP), confirmed the incident and four deaths to THISDAY.

He said the remains of the dead had been deposited at the University of Port Harcourt mortuary while the injured persons were also taken to the same hospital for treatment.

The deaths added to the gloom of most members of the party following the Supreme Court judgment which confirmed that the APC could not field any candidate in Rivers State in the elections which start this Saturday.

The National Chairman of APC, Adams Oshiomhole, said he would not present the party's flag to its governorship candidate, Tonye Cole, during the rally.

The factional Governorship Candidate and Senator Representing Rivers South East Senatorial District in the

National Assembly, Senator Magnus Abe, was at the rally but was not recognised.

Speaking at the rally, the president also stated that his administration would remain steadfast and consistent in its fight against corruption.

"Our objectives are very clear. We will remain steadfast and consistent in our fight against corruption. We will continue in our effort to revolutionise our agricultural sector.

"Nigeria will remain one united country and we will be fair and just to all sections of the country. We will remain accountable to God and you as we continue to serve you as President.

"Let all Nigerians have the faith we will be fair to all and we will not allow any constituency in this country to be intimidated."

Amaechi said: "Whatever PDP

wants in Rivers State, we are equal to the task. In 2015, the army tried to arrest me as a sitting governor. Now, we have a governor who is trying to negotiate with us, asking us to give him governor and in return, we will support us for President. He is afraid, isn't it? We will battle him till the last.

Also speaking at the rally, Amaechi, accused Wike, of lobbying to be returned as governor for a second term.

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## ACF Endorses Buhari's Re-election Bid

**John Shiklam** in Kaduna

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) has endorsed President Muhammadu Buhari for re-election next Saturday's presidential polls.

In a statement issued yesterday at the end of a meeting in Kaduna, the forum noted that "the Buhari administration has taken steps to improve and reposition the country economically."

The statement, signed by the acting Chairman of the forum,

Alhaji Musa Liman Kwande, said: "Buhari deserves a second term to consolidate on his achievements."

and has made achievements in combating insurgency and other insecurity challenges bedeviling the country.

The forum explained that in endorsing Buhari, it carefully studied the antecedents of major presidential candidates, their manifestoes and policy documents of their parties, alongside the need for social, political and economic stability in the country.

"The ACF is therefore of the view that certain attributes such as clarity of thought, unity of purpose, content of character and morality of the candidates, their leadership qualities, performance and general acceptability of the

