

PDP Primaries: DPO Stoned, One Killed in Gombe

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Deputy Speaker, former commissioners lose in Bauchi

Segun Awofadeji in Gombe

One person was reportedly killed in Billiri Local Government Area of Gombe State last Sunday evening when the police were trying to drive away unruly supporters from the venue of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) primary election for Billiri/Balanga federal constituency.

However, THISDAY gathered that in other parts of the state, the PDP primaries for the state Assembly and House of Representatives were relatively peaceful.

THISDAY, who monitored the exercise which was held at Tangji, an outskirt of Billiri town, also learnt that the Divisional Police Officer of the area (DPO), who supervised the security operations at the venue, was badly stoned on his forehead, an action which created rancour that resulted in the shooting of a supporter with one other sustaining serious injury.

However, confirming the incident, the Gombe State Police Commissioner, Ishola B Babaita, in a telephone conversation with THISDAY, distanced the killing from the primary election.

According to him, "The killing had nothing to do with the primary election as it was far away from the venue of the primary election."

Meanwhile, the election, which was held under a tensed atmosphere, saw Hon Ali Isa JC polling 43 out of the 61 votes cast to beat nine other contestants, while his closest rival, Hon Rambai Ibrahim Ayala, polled nine votes.

Winner of the election, Isa JC, who represented the constituency from 2015 to 2019, promised quality representation if elected again in the 2023 general election, just as he thanked the delegates for the confidence bestowed on him.

He said the election was a family affair, and that they will move in immediately to see how they can work together as a team and reconcile themselves.

The former lawmaker said: "You can see that 80 percent of the contestants hugged and congratulated me. So I assure you that we are going to come out strong as one team, so the APC should start parking their loads."

But in his reaction, Hon Ayala, the current member representing Billiri East in the state House of Assembly, who contested and polled nine votes, he alleged the militarisation of the whole exercise.

He said the primary election was not a war as it turned out to be, adding that a level playing ground should have been allowed.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Speaker of the Bauchi State House of Assembly, Hon. Danlami Ahmed Kawule, is among leading politicians in Bauchi State that failed to secure the tickets of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) for the 2023 general elections.

Others who lost their bids to get the nod of the party to contest for House of Representatives are former Commissioner of Works and Transport, Mr. Ibrahim Abdulkadir and former Commissioner for Science and Technology, Ms. Maryam Garba Bagel.

The Deputy Speaker lost the ticket for the Bauchi Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives while Ibrahim Abdulkadir lost same ticket for Alkaleri/Kirfi Federal Constituency just as Maryam Garba Bagel lost that of Bogoro/Dass/Tafawa Balewa Federal Constituency.

THISDAY checks revealed that Mr. Aminu Ali Garu defeated Dalami Kawule who currently represents Bauchi Central Constituency in the State House of Assembly while Mr. Ibrahim

Abdulkadir lost to Dallatun Kirfi just as Ms. Maryam Bagel lost to Mr. Kefas Magaji.

Mr. Ali Garu defeated the Deputy Speaker by a wide margin in the election voted by the PDP delegates on Sunday in Bauchi.

In an interview with journalists shortly after he was declared winner, Garu said that his victory is a victory for democracy and the good people of Bauchi Federal Constituency.

He commended the delegates who participated in the election for finding him worthy to represent the constituency, calling on other aspirants to join hands with him to win the forthcoming 2023 general elections.

The deputy speaker declined to speak to journalists when he was approached but simply said that "the process is still on."

In her reaction to the result, Bagel said that "the primaries have been won and lost. This time, we are not the winners and we took everything in good faith. May Allah replace it with the best option for us insha Allah."

She added that "for those 30 out of 96 delegates that believed in me and gave me their votes making me a 2nd runner out of nine contestants, I thank you for the confidence you bestowed in me.

"For my team of supporters and well-wishers, your prayers and words of encouragement are much appreciated.

"We live to fight another day. Alhamdulillah! Alhamdulillah! Alhamdulillah!" she concluded.