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for the conferment of Honorary Doctorate Degree in Public Administration on Governor Oshiomhole by Samuel Adegboyega University (SAU), Ogwa, Edo State, Saturday.

RE-RUN POLLS: Shootings continue in Rivers

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legislative seats in Rivers State continued, yesterday, as the results were being collated.

There were sporadic shootings in Abonema area of Port Harcourt, the state capital. The shooting which lasted for about 30 minutes caused panic as people around Mile 1 and Azikiwe road scampered for safety.

The cause of the deafening gunshots was yet to be ascertained at press time but some security operatives arrived the scene on time to restore normalcy.

There were also shootings, last night, causing heavy stampede in Rumuola and Rumuigbo areas of Port-Harcourt.

The shooting in Rumuigbo, base of Tony Okocha, APC House of Representatives candidate for Obio Akpor Federal Constituency, occurred around 8.00 p.m. and caused many pedestrians to take flight.

Peterside survives gun attack, Wike loses aide

One person was feared dead, yesterday evening and two others reportedly sustained gunshot injuries during fierce shooting at UTC junction on Azikiwe road.

The scene of the incident is about 200 meters from the office of the Department of State Service, DSS and a walking distance to Government House, Port Harcourt.

There were conflicting accounts of what led to the incident. Dr Dakuku Peterside, who was the governorship candidate of the All Progressives Congress, APC, alleged that he was the target for assassination, adding that the gunmen opened fire on the vehicle conveying him, his running mate in the last general elections, Asita and the Chairman of his party, Dr Davies Ikanya.

A statement by Peterside's media aide, Mr Sylvester

Asoya alleged that his Police orderly, Mr Emma Esi sustained gunshot injuries and was rushed to the hospital.

"Two Jeeps belonging to Emeka Woke, Nyesom Wike's Chief of Staff, carrying two unknown gunmen trailed us to UTC Junction and opened fire on my car. Our car, however, did a detour first to Aba road, then to old GRA with the two jeeps still trailing us. We drove to the DSS office to seek refuge and on getting to the gate the unknown gunmen opened fire again at the DSS men on guard.

"The exchange of fire between the DSS men and the assailants lasted for more than 30 minutes. In the course of the exchange of fire, my Police detail, Cpl Emma Esi was shot at and seriously injured. This is a very ugly experience but I thank God that my colleagues and I escaped unhurt.

"When the DSS men demobilized the two jeeps, we found out that the man at the back of the car who was identifying us to the assailants was Wike's Chief of Staff, Emeka Woke. He has been arrested by the DSS.

My CS lost an aide—Wike

Meantime, Governor Nyesom Wike, who spoke generally on the re-run elections to newsmen in Government House said the aide to his Chief of Staff, Mr Emeka Woke died in the shooting.

According to him, he detailed his Chief of Staff, Mr Woke to monitor the rerun election result of Ikwerre Local Government (the local council of former governor Chibuike Amaechi) to where ever they were taking it to in the state capital.

He accused Peterside and his team of allegedly opening fire on his Chief of Staff, saying the aide of his Chief of Staff died immediately from the incident

"As I talk to you now, my chief of staff said his aide had been shot dead. Dakuku and his team

trailed him from Isiokpo where he had gone to monitor movement of result from Ikwerre local government area and shot him around UTC junction," he said.

Describing the alleged act as extreme desperation by those trying to allegedly tamper with the result of Ikwerre local government, the governor said never in all his years in politics had he seen the huge involvement of military men in elections in the country.

Wike, Amaechi, clash again at Mile 1

Governor Nyesom Wike and the Minister of Transportation, Mr Chibuike Amaechi, clashed again, yesterday, at Mile 1 Police station over result for Ward 10 in Port Harcourt City local government.

Leaders of the two political parties stormed the Police station with their supporters. On the side of the Minister of Transportation, Mr Amaechi were the Acting Managing Director, Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Mrs Ibim Semenitari; DG NIMASA, and governorship candidate of the APC, Dr Dakuku Peterside and state Chairman of the APC, Dr Davies Ibiama.

Those who came with Governor Wike were the former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Chief Austin Opara; former Local government Service Commission, Mr Azubike Emeregini; Senatorial candidate of the PDP for Rivers East, Chief George Sekibo and others.

About 500 party supporters, who took over the premises of the Police station, spilled over to the ever busy Ikwerre road.

There was also heavy security presence as soldiers, policemen and men of the Department of State Service, DSS, who accompanied the party leaders positioned themselves strategically in the premises.

Vanguard gathered that the party leaders stormed the police station over the Ward 10 PHALG Collation officer, Mrs Ekwe Adebisa, that was in the Police station.

On the incident at Mile 1 Police station, Governor Wike said he went to the station when he was told that a candidate of his party, Blessing Nsiegebe was arrested by the Police and detained at the station.

"I got a text that one of the candidates of my party, Blessing Nsiegebe was abducted and was at Mile one Police station. We drove down to see things. I saw her there.

We've arrested 24 suspects — AIG Bolanta

Meantime, the Police have arrested 24 persons for electoral offences, just as the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC,

suspended the rerun elections in additional two local governments, thus bringing the number of local government areas where it suspended elections in eight. Assistant Inspector General of Police, Zone 6, Mr Baba Bolanta said 24 suspects were arrested at different locations during the rerun elections in the state.

The zonal Police Chief said that only four persons died during the elections in the state. He said he was embarrassed by the outrageous figures of death in some newspapers.

His words: "It is pertinent I let you know that we have 24 suspects comprising 22 males and 2 females in police custody, who were arrested from different parts of the state. They are presently undergoing interrogation on allegations of criminal or electoral offences or both. I was startled this morning after seeing outrageous figures of deaths associated with elections as dished out by the media. To keep the records straight, four deaths were recorded with two in Buguma, while Nonwa Tai and Omuanwa each recorded one."

INEC cancels elections in 8 LGs so far

Announcing the suspension of rerun elections in additional two local governments, taking the number of councils where polls have suspended to eight, Rivers State Resident Electoral Commissioner, REC, Mr Aniedi Ikoikwak, in a statement, yesterday, said the commission was still collating results and studying details around other elections.

So far, the local government areas where elections have been suspended are Andoni, Asari Toru, Gokana, Khana, Tai, Eleme, Etche and Bonny.

Sagay decries wave of violence

Condemning the violence that rocked the state in the re-run elections, Head of the Presidential Anti-

Corruption Committee, Prof Itse Sagay, SAN, called on the Federal Government to dismantle obstacles preventing the conduct of free and fair elections in Rivers State.

Sagay said: "Mark what I am saying. What you have everywhere is organised rigging and writing of results. I said it so many times and that is why the Supreme Court decision on the governorship elections in those areas is still a mystery to me. Now, why is there too much violence? There is violence because for the first time, the Federal Government tried to institute free and fair elections by injecting a lot of security personnel who will stop the usual hijacking of election materials."

FG must embark on disarmament in Rivers—Tsav

Retired Police Commissioner, Alhaji Abubakar Tsav, said: "The situation is very sad. During the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan, the foundation for this manner of violence was laid in Rivers State. We recall that Mrs Patience Jonathan once snatched a microphone from then Governor Rotimi Amaechi creating the foundation for the violence that followed later in that dispensation.

"Unless the government does something decisive on the issue, we may experience such degree of violence in subsequent elections in the state."

Hold Buhari responsible —Fayose

Governor of Ekiti State, Mr Ayodele Fayose said President Muhammadu Buhari has a lot of explanations to do over the violence and loss of lives being witnessed in Rivers State.

According to Fayose, members of the APC were emboldened to unleash violence on the people of Rivers State and other parts of the country because they know that President Buhari won't lift a finger against any of his party members perpetrating evil."