

EDITORIAL

Anambra Guber Polls: Democracy's First Steps.

On Saturday, 6 February, 2010, the attention of the whole of Nigeria and the international community was riveted to Anambra State.

The reason was the gubernatorial election in that state. Every Nigerian and the international community wanted to know how the election would unfold because it was believed that whatever happened in Anambra would be a sign of what to expect in 2011 General Elections.

The profile of the gladiators were so intimidating that everyone wished for the worst but prayed for the best.

An incumbent Governor, Peter Obi contested with an ex-Governor Chris Ngige as well as Andy Uba who won the gubers elections in 2007 but was thrown out by the courts.

A former Governor of the Central Bank, Chukwuma Soludo was also there.

However, the police rose to the occasion. There were over 20 000 policemen drafted from several parts of the country. Prior to the election, the Inspector General of Police Mr. Ogbonnaya Onovo accepted the request of the Anambra State Commissioner of Police, Philemon Leha to post 50 Anti Riot Police Units to the state.

The plan was to have at least five police officers and men in each of 4, 653 polling booths.

The result was that the figures released by INECs Resident Electoral Commissioner Josiah Uwazuronye appeared very realistic.

Peter Obi scored 97, 843 votes to beat Ngige's 60, 240 votes. Soludo scored 59,355 votes.

The Beam sees this as a sharp contrast to the 'Carry Go' syndrome Nigerians are used to. In such cases, figures are announced in millions, even when every one knows that Nigerian's hardly come out to vote.

Another encouraging trend was that there was no "order from above" to deliver a particular candidate.

The signal is that our Democracy is at last beginning to walk. We commend the Police for not succumbing to orders from above. Let other states borrow a leaf from the Anambra example.

THE BEAM NEWSPAPER

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