

Nigeria: 16 police killed during election

by UPI

LAGOS, Nigeria - Sixteen police officers were killed in separate incidents during Nigeria's violence- and voter fraud-plagued presidential election.

At least 18 people died in Election Day violence. Officials had hoped the election would be a display of democracy, to mark the first handover from one civilian president to another in a country that has seen years of military rule, observers said.

An attempt to car bomb the main electoral office in the capital, Abuja, was thwarted at the last moment, the Vanguard newspaper reported Sunday.

Critics called for Saturday's election to be voided and rerun, while members of the ruling People's Democratic Party hailed it as a success, reported This Day, a newspaper in Lagos.

Early results indicated the PDP would stay in power, as expected, This Day reported Sunday.

European Union observers witnessed violence, ballot stuffing and widespread fraud, said chief EU observer Max van den Berg.

"For the moment, I am worried," he said.

Umaru Yar'Adua, a little-known state governor, was President Olusegun Obasanjo's chosen successor and, therefore, was favored to win, the observers said.

Final vote tallies are expected Monday.

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