

# 7 feared dead as *Okada* riders clash in Ogun

From Peter Moses, Abeokuta

Seven people were feared dead in a clash between Hausa and Yoruba commercial motorcyclists (*okada* riders) at Ibese in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Our correspondent gathered that the commercial motorcyclists operating at Dangote Cement Factory junction at Ibese were at loggerheads with the union leaders over hike in ticket fee from N600 to N800.

The clash, which started on Monday, snowballed into an ethnic crisis between the Hausa and the Yoruba in the area.

The locals told *Daily Trust* that between Monday and Tuesday evening, seven persons have been reportedly killed in the crisis.

Sources said over 12

motorcyclists have been burnt just as the locals intercepted Dangote trucks and used them to barricade the road to stop movement in the area.

A community leader who pleaded anonymity said some soldiers were mobilised to restore sanity on Monday, but the warring parties resumed hostilities on Tuesday.

The source said the clash escalated yesterday when soldiers allegedly shot at aggrieved indigenes, killing one, while another was hospitalised.

"The crisis which started on Monday over tickets snowballed into an ethnic clash between Yoruba and Hausa *okada* riders. More than twelve motorcycles belonging to both Yoruba and Hausa were burnt. Two people died on Monday. Some military

men were mobilised to restore sanity, but this morning (Tuesday), the clash continued.

"Some indigenes intercepted some Dangote goods, burnt them and barricaded the road with vehicles to stop movement of vehicles in the area. Another set of soldiers came on Tuesday morning to restore peace, but while moving around, there was a clash with the aggrieved indigenes. We learnt that there were shootings by the soldiers. One person died instantly, while the second person was taken to the hospital," the source said.

The Public Relations Officer of State Command, Abimbola Oyeyemi, confirmed the incident yesterday.

Oyeyemi, however, said that he could not confirm the number of casualties.