

NEWS

Six Dead In Onitsha Clashes

AT least six people were killed in Onitsha yesterday when a feud between MASSOB members and the National Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO) degenerated into street battles.

One witness said men armed with guns and machetes boarded a bus, forced out all the passengers and shot and slashed one of them at the roadside.

"He was killed in my presence and his head was cut off," said Charles Mbaria, an estate agent who was a passenger on the bus. The incident happened on Friday. On my way back in

the evening I saw five burned corpses at several points in Upper Iweka. ... We don't know who the killers were," he said.

There were pockets of violence on Saturday in some parts of the city, where drivers stopped and searched vehicles and demanded money from people at roadblocks, the Civil Liberties Organisation, a rights group, said.

Police have arrested 18 members of the banned Movement for the Actualisation of a Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) over the past two days in connection with fighting in Onitsha, area commander Matthew Uyanwa said.

MASSOB denied responsibility for the violence. "We are not responsible for the killings. We are not a militant group," said Chidi Ajaegbu, a spokesman for the group.

Kaduna Honours Iwais

Briefs

INGO Forum Executives

THE International Non-Governmental Organisations Forum in Nigeria has elected a new set of executives. At a meeting held recently in Abuja, Dr. Otiye Igbozor, the Country Director of Action Aid International, Nigeria was elected as the Chairman.

Other members include: Rosemary Kaduna of OXFAM, Deputy Chairperson; Bright Ekwemadu, Managing Director, PSI/SFI, Secretary; Ben Root, Save the Children, Publicity Secretary; and Binboda Showande of MMIS/JSI, Assistant Membership Secretary.

Igbozor said the INGOs operating in Nigeria face a multitude of challenges and need a strong, and well-structured body that represents their views and positions.

Outgoing co-ordinator of the Forum's secretariat, Hajia Jummai Umar, said one of the objectives of the forum is the provision of an avenue for sharing and learning. The forum she said is working