

Another killing sparks protests in Owo

SOcial and economic activities were disrupted for several hours on Wednesday and yesterday in Owo, Ondo State by commercial bus drivers protesting the killing of one of their colleagues by a policeman at a check-point, allegedly over a N20 bribe.

The victim, Gbenga Ojuade, who was driving a white Toyota Bus with registration number ONDO XA 630 KAA, was said to have been stopped by a team of policemen who had mounted a road block at Iyere Junction on Ute Road at about 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday evening for routine checks.

The driver, who was said to be carrying bags of tomatoes and pepper, was allegedly requested by the Police to "settle" them. It was gathered that Ojuade parted with N20 on the grounds that he had not collected any pay from the

's integrity

the words contained in *The Comet* newspapers under the caption 'Obasanjo - Ekiti monarchs meet over Fayose-Ewi feud' or any similar publication of and concerning the plaintiff (Babalola), pending the motion on notice."

Joined as co-defendants are Turning Point Newspapers, publisher of *The Comet* and its editor, Mr. Gbenga Omotoso.

Further hearing in the matter was adjourned to August 1, 2006

From Niyi Bello, Akure

owners of the loads.

His insistence that would not pay more than N20, according to source allegedly infuriated the policemen, one of whom was said to have fired his gun at the bus. The bullet hit the driver at the back of his neck, killing him instantly.

The policemen allegedly abandoned their duty post and fled into town to escape the anger of a mob that had immediately gathered at the scene of the incident.

When the news of the killing got to the Ilale Unit of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), the drivers were said to have sent a team to the scene to confirm the incident, after which they took to the streets in protest.

By last night, two Police posts at Ita-Oba and Idasen in Owo metropolis had been razed to the ground while a detachment of armed mobile policemen had arrived to reinforce security at the bigger Divisional Police Headquarters at Ijebu-Owo.

Eyewitness accounts indicated that many policemen resident in the town had fled the city to escape the anger of the drivers, who claimed that the incident was not the first in the town.

Police authorities have, however, appealed for calm with a pledge to punish the trigger-happy cop, who they said had been arrested and was undergoing interrogations.

Senior Police officers who visited the town expressed regrets over the incident.