

## NEWS

# Policeman, two feared killed as 'Area Boys' clash in Ibadan

From Sola Adeyemo,  
Ibadan

**A** SPILL-OVER of Tuesday evening clash between some street urchins, popularly called "area boys," and the police at the Agbeni, Ifeleye, Ogunpa/Idikan in Ibadan yesterday snowballed into a bloody clash with three persons, including a policeman, feared dead.

The fracas led to the arrest of some residents as police mounted a manhunt for the killers of the policeman. The areas were deserted for almost two hours starting from about 8.00am.

The Nation learnt that the clash was triggered by a ~~meek~~ <sup>standoff</sup> between some ready-made clothes sellers

## Couple docked for alleged N384,000 theft

From Wale Folarin, Osogbo

**A** COUPLE, Lasisi and Esther Oyetunji

and their footwears counterparts at Agbeni.

"One man from the fancy (ready-made) shops came to park his vehicle in front of the footwears' shops. While he was trying to move out, the tyre of his car stepped on one person's foot and so the footwears sellers protested, saying the man had been fond of parking his car there, whereas, the fancy sellers would not allow them at their own area. One of the footwears sellers slapped the driver of the car and in return, he went away to mobilise his people for retaliation. Before they came, the footwears sellers had called the police. Confusion erupted and when the policemen came, they arrested three men from among the "aju ina" boys. They were taken away.

"Yesterday (Wednesday),

when the police came back for more arrests, the "aju ina" boys had converged and resisted the security agents. In the course of the confusion, the police started shooting, and one man called Saka (a.k.a. Gentle) was hit by a bullet. He fell. But in retaliation, the "aju ina" boys descended on the policeman that fired the shot, hit him on the head with a plank and the man died. Saka's colleagues carried him to a hospital for treatment but on their way, it was discovered that he had died. When some of the men came back to announce the death of Saka, the colleagues in annoyance poured petrol on the body of the dead policeman and set him ablaze", an eyewitness who spoke on condition of anonymity, narrated to *The Nation*.

A visit to the place, however, did not show any sign that anybody was burnt, although there were planks and broken chairs with tyres flung around.

Another version of the story had it that upon the arrest of three area boys on Tuesday evening, people of the area met to assist the police, claiming that the menace of the "aju ina" boys was getting out of hand.

A fairly old man who said he saw it all happen, claimed that one policeman was killed, saying, "I can confirm to you that a policeman was killed. I saw his body on the ground. When his other colleagues saw that one of them was dead, they scampered. I saw one of them with one shoe on. While some were jumping into the van some man-

aged to sit on the bonnet to escape".

Another person who also refused to mention his name for fear of arrest, however said that actually a policeman was hit and he fell.

"He later woke up and I saw him flee away from the place when everybody had scattered and the police were shooting sporadically, trying to arrest people."

Apart from Saka, other two persons were hit. One identified as Wasiu Oriade was hit in the stomach and some members of the outlawed Odua Peoples Congress (OPC) were said to have taken him away to extract the bullet lodged in him. The fate of the third person hit by bullet was unknown as of press time.

The armoured personnel carrier parked in front of the Agodi Government Secretariat gate was moved to the area to quell the cri-

sis.

It was later returned to the gate after normalcy had returned to the area. Before then, Mobile policemen were spiritedly hunting for residents to arrest.

When *The Nation* visited the troubled Oke Padre/Ogunpa area, some women were seen crying, saying that they knew nothing about the crisis, "but the police just started entering our houses arresting people. They have taken away some of our men now and we don't know where they have been taken."

When the Police Commissioner Mr Jonathan Johnson's mobile phone was called, a policewoman asked our correspondent to call back later.

When the Public Relations Officer, Mr Olu Akinmoladun, was called, however, he confirmed the fracas but said no policeman died.