

# Five killed in Ondo clashes 56

**F**IVE people were feared killed in two different clashes that occurred in Akure, the Ondo State capital and Ondo town between Sunday evening and yesterday morning.

The Ondo incident, which started on Sunday evening involved members of the Petroleum Tankers Drivers (PTD) branch of the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), Ore depot and policemen, while in Akure was a clash among members of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) over leadership.

The Ondo incident, according to Omotunde Omoniyi, the Chairman of Ore branch of NUPENG, was said to have left three people dead, one missing and many others injured. In Akure, one person was said to have been killed.

Omoniyi said violence started at the Arigbadola junction, in Ondo town on Sunday when a tanker driver being pursued by policemen from the Ondo-life Road veered off the road and hit a commercial motorcycle. The motorcycle had three people on it.

**From Babatope Okeowo, Akure**

The *Okada* rider was said to have died instantly. The two passengers on the bike were in critical condition at the General Hospital, Ondo.

Omoniyi said the development led to the members of the Amalgamated Commercial Motorcycle Riders Association of Nigeria (ACOMORAN) to invade the Fagun police station, Ondo, with a threat to burn it. It was alleged that the members of ACOMORAN also wanted to burn the tanker.

However, he said the people were however persuaded not to do it, adding that he personally informed the Area Commander of Police, Ondo Command, Mr. Isa Umoru of the development.

His words: "To our surprise the same Area Commander led his men to the venue of our second year anniversary, throwing teargas canisters and shooting indiscriminately.

"Three of our boys were shot, two died on the spot and the third one which

we thought we could rescue died on the way to the hospital in Ore. We also have about 10 of our members seriously injured and some missing."

He said the union had already stopped loading of fuel from the Ore depot, threatening that they would not resume loading until the policemen who killed their men face the wrath of the law.

But Governor Olusegun Agagu has directed his Special Adviser on Politics, Chief Segun Adegoke to seek peace with NUPENG members. Mr Femi Johnson, a Special Assistant to the Governor on Political Matters accompanied him.

The Akure incident involved two factions groups of the NURTW and it turned Akure, the state capital into battle ground over who becomes the new chairman.

An eyewitness said that a faction of the union, led by Chief Obayori Oladutele, popularly known as "*Die the matter*" stormed the secretariat of the NURTW on Ado-Owo road in Akure demanding for the immediate resignation of the incumbent chair-

man, Solomon Adejayan, whose tenure was alleged to have expired few months ago.

Oladutele contested the chairmanship with Adejayan in 2003, but lost.

The *Nation* learnt that the fight spread from the union's secretariat to other parts of the town and nearly caused commotion at the State High Court premises, venue of the Election Petitions Tribunal, during the sitting.

During the fracas, one of the vehicles used by the hoodlums to pursue their rival members knocked down a middle aged woman on the High Court Road and killed her instantly.

Police officers led by the Commissioner of Police, Mr Sheu Babalola, later arrested some of the hoodlums.

The command's spokesman, Mr Adeniran Aremu said only one person died in the Ondo incident while he denied any death in Akure. He however, said seven people have been arrested over the Akure incident.

Aremu said the Police Commissioner had left Akure to Ondo and Ore to assess the situation.