

Three killed as MASSOB, police clash in Anambra

ABOUT three persons have been allegedly shot

while several others sustained various degree of injury following a clash between members of the Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Police yesterday in Nnewi, Anambra during the Movements protest march and rally marking the 41st anniversary of the declaration of Biafra.

Several other members of the Movement were arrested in various parts of the state, such as Onitsha, Nnewi and Awka.

The members of the Movement numbering about 5,000 had marched from Umunze through Ajali, Ekwulobia to Nnobi where they turned to head for our Lady of Assumption Cathedral (Catholic) Church, Nnewi where they would have ended the protest march.

According a source who preferred anonymity, on approaching the Cathedral, heavily armed policemen, with about 15 Nissan Jeep trucks led by the Nnewi Police Area Command, stopped them and asked them to turn back.

The MASSOB members, on the directive of the Nnewi Regional Administrator, Umeaka Christian made U-turn amidst pro-Biafran songs, while the police escorted them out of Nnewi, but on reaching Power Holding Company of Nigeria's

■ **Adimike GEORGE** ■
Onitsha

(PHCN) Nnewi office along Nnobi Road, an officer issued order to the police and they opened fire and tear-gassed the MASSOB members composed of young and old people.

Ten injured as party supporters clash over mobilization fee

NOfewer than ten people were reportedly injured on Thursday night in Akure, the Ondo State capital when some hoodlums suspected to be supporters of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) engaged themselves in a brawl over the sharing of mobilization fee given to them for Democracy Day celebration.

The Nation learnt that during the fracas which lasted for hours dangerous weapons such as cutlasses, axe and charms were freely used as most of them said to be operated under the influence of alcohol.

Shop owners along Oba-Adesida, Oyemekun road had to hurriedly closed their shops and run for safety, residents were also in panic.

It was learnt that the fracas ensued when a faction of the hoodlums protested against the N1,000 given to them by their leaders instead of N2,000 per person released by the state government. Those who received deep machete cut during the melee have been hospitalized in an undisclosed hospital in the Ondo State capital.

They came from across the 18 local government councils

Consequently, this brought to a temporary halt the movement of vehicles and persons as MASSOB members and other people within the vicinity took to their heels.

Speaking to newsmen later when they returned, the Nnewi Regional Administrator said that the attack on them were

unprovoked as they obeyed the police directive and were not violent.

He alleged that the police had killed three of their members killed, but would not say the number of casualties and those arrested as at the press time because, they have not taken count of their members.

■ **Damisi OJO** ■
Akure

in the state most of them dressed in 'Ankara' uniform to participate in the celebration which many political analysts described as display of power and resources by the ruling PDP.

One of the political leaders in the state and human rights activist, Dr. Tunji Abayomi in an interview with reporters described the last Thursday Democracy Day in Ondo State as a political jamboree which was an insult on the intelligence of people in the state.

According to Abayomi, who was the governorship aspirant of Action Congress (AC) in the 2007 election said "the Democracy Day hosted by Gov. Agagu and the PDP ought to be a celebration of common achievements in political advancement of Nigeria, but turned into PDP rally in Ondo State.

The lawyer said "There was no original wisdom in the management of issues, the motive behind the PDP orchestrated rally is to provoke

hostility against the management of collective governance. PDP government has proved to be satisfied in exercising power rather than good government".

He lamented that despite starvation on the faces of masses in the state, the state government still spent close to N1 billion for a rally in order to proclaim the powerfulness of PDP in the state.

He was optimistic that the age of progressive leadership that would focus on the peoples' welfare instead of power display is around the corner.

Abayomi wondered why a government decided to spend a whopping sum of money to bring a large crowd of people from all the local government in the state and paid them between N1,000 and N5,000.00 in addition to other attractive gift like Ankara in order to participate in a phoney political rally under the pretence of celebrating Democracy Day.

He however urged the suffering masses in the state to remain calm, nothing that the day of reckoning is coming soon when everything would be put in proper shape.