

## Two policemen die in clash with OPC in Oyo

**T**WO policemen were feared dead yesterday in a clash between men of the law enforcement agency and members of the Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC) in the ancient town of Oyo.

The fracas came only eight days after a flood of fury brought tears to the face of many residents of Ibadan, the Oyo State capital and brought attention of the world to the state.

Many OPC men also sustained serious injuries in the clash that left Sabo area of the ancient town deserted after gunshots boomed sporadically for hours.

It was gathered that the clash arose during an argument over a land with some OPC members, while the men of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), who were on patrol stopped over on seeing the rowdy situation. On enquiring about what was happening, the OPC men were said to have shunned the policemen, insisting that the matter did not require the intervention of the police.

**From Bisi Oladele, Ibadan and Bode Durojaye, Oyo**

Apparently irked by the response, the policemen, a source hinted, ordered the OPC men into the waiting patrol vehicle, but this was resisted by the angry OPC members.

The situation was said to have later snowballed into a show of strength. The police and OPC reportedly opened fire on each other leading to the death of two policemen while some OPC men were said to have sustained serious injuries.

The incident forced residents to hurriedly lock up their shops and home while scampering for safety.

When *The Nation* visited the Police Area Command office at Durbar, the Area Commander, was said to be attending to a crucial meeting. A reinforcement of both regular and mobile policemen were seen on standby.

A source confided in our reporter that three guns belonging to the police were still missing.

Unspecified number of

persons have been arrested by the police with the support of men of the Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN). The leader of the OPC popularly known as Baba Araga, was said to be at large as at press time.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Femi

Okanlawon, however, denied that two policemen were killed. He said only one corporal was killed by supporters of the lead suspect when they ambushed the law enforcement agents.

According to him, the command later reinforced

and recovered the deceased's rifle with which they killed him. Okanlawon said several other locally made arms were recovered from the suspect's house, stressing that no police gun was missing.

## Eight bomb blast victims to be discharged soon in Abuja

**T**HE remaining eight persons who were wounded in the United Nations Abuja building bomb blast are to be discharged soon.

The Chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Ekumankama Obasi told the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director, Dr. Luis Sambo after the inspection of the UN building and a visit to the victims of the blast recuperating at the National Hospital, Abuja.

He said: "We thank God we were able to han-

**From Augustine Ehikioya, Abuja**

dle the situation. We had 75 people brought in at the same time. Eight patients are left and most of them will be discharged next week."

Noting that none of the victims brought in died at the hospital, Sambo commended the medical team and staff of the hospital for their efficiency.

Even though he expressed sadness at the death of 23 others, he said that the WHO remains committed to its work in

Nigeria.

He also said that the WHO will do everything possible to boost the morale of its staff which has been dampened by the bomb blast.

He said, "We will not spare any effort to support the staff and families of those who lost their lives."

The WHO regional director came to Nigeria yesterday from Cote d'Ivoire to assess the impact of the blast. He was accompanied to the hospital by the Permanent Secretary in the Health Ministry, Linus Awute.