

# 3 killed, shops razed as Ibadan masquerades supporters clash again

By OLUWATOYIN MALIK

**T**HE Oyo State Police Command has arrested three suspects in connection with the crisis that erupted recently between two rival masquerades, Moshood Ekugbemi and Alaba Ojo Weliweli, with their supporters in Ibadan, which led to the killing of three men and destruction of property.

The names of the suspects were given as Olasunkanmi Ahmed (22), Dauda Abdulahi (17) and Iskilu Olalekan (21).

Speaking with *Crime Reports* on the arrest, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Adekunle Ajisebutu, who spoke on behalf of the state Commissioner of Police, Sam Adegboyi, said that the crisis occurred on September 15, at about 2a.m, at Ita Saku, Itamaya, Foko, Oritamerin and Agbeni areas.

According to the PPRO, many shops were looted while others were set ablaze, adding that the quick response of the police saved the day, otherwise, the hoodlums would have set the entire state on fire.

He stated further that the two leaders of the group, Alaba and Ekugbemi, as well as other supporters who participated in the disruption of peace of the city were on the wanted list of the command.

"But we are on their trail and I assure that very soon, they will be arrested and made to face the law," the PPRO said, adding that the police commissioner assured that the police command would continue to protect lives and property.

*Crime Reports* gathered that there had always been supremacy battle between Ekugbemi and Alaba, which was usually more pronounced during the yearly *Egungun* festival in Ibadan. Past clashes between the supporters of the two masquerades had led to killings, destruction of property and attack on members of the public caught in their midst.

On the latest crisis, *Crime Reports* gathered that it was Ekugbemi who organised a carnival to mark the recent Eid-el-Kabir (Il-eya) festival, but the Alaba group went there uninvited.

Ekugbemi and his supporters were reported to have told them to leave since they were not invited, with the resultant clash between the two groups.

The hoodlums were said to have seized the opportunity of the clash to break into shops, using diggers, with the shop of a particular cloth merchant, Mrs Opeyemi Oladiti, mostly affected as they made away with expensive materials and other valuables.

Also, three men, including an *okada* rider, Ka-

zeem Omole, were reportedly inflicted with machete cuts and shot, resulting in their death. The motorcycle of the deceased rider was also said to have been taken away by the hoodlums. One of the corpses of the deceased had yet to be claimed as of the time of writing this report.

On the same night, the elder brother of a popular rice merchant in Ibadan, Sunday Agarawu, was reported to have been inflicted with machete cuts and N200,000 allegedly

collected from him while he was supervising the offloading of Agarawu's goods. A source told *Crime Reports* that the hoodlums asked to be 'settled' but was not satisfied with what Agarawu's elder brother gave them.

*Crime Reports* had an interview with the suspects at the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) office in Ibadan. Below are the excerpts of their narration:

**Olasunkanmi Ahmed**  
"I am a cobbler and live

at Itamaya. On September 15, there was a clash between two rival masquerades with their supporters and I joined the Alaba Ojo Weliweli faction to throw stones at the people belonging to the other faction, though I did not know what led to the clash. I did this because I saw Ekugbemi's supporters breaking shops and vandalising vehicles. I also saw Ekugbemi holding a pistol. I didn't see Alaba that day but I know that he has two guns. I saw him with the

guns during the last masquerade festival."

**Dauda Abdulahi**

"I am an SSS2 student. On September 15, I left my father's shop to go and eat when I saw people running, stoning and destroying shops. I also joined them, took a stick from a young man and started using it. I was a supporter of Alaba group."

**Iskilu Olalekan**

"I live with mother at Popoyemoja. On September 15, I went to Alaba's place at Ita Saku. From there, Alaba and I left for Born Photo area to a carnival organised by Ekugbemi. As we watched, Alaba called me to go and meet one Sadiq to collect a cutlass which I did. As I made for a spot within the vicinity where the carnival was going on, one of Ekugbemi's supporters saw me with cutlass and he called others. They attacked me until supporters from Alaba group came to rescue me. I learnt that Ekugbemi and Alaba had been having a face-off before the day."

*Crime Reports* learnt that the suspects were arraigned in court on Friday, September 30, and remanded in prison.



The suspects

## Fake army General arrested after swindling unemployed youths

ADELOWO OLADIPO - MINNA

THE Niger State command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has arrested a fake military officer known as General Ishaku but whose real name is Mohammed Usman.

The 41-year-old fake General, who claimed to be an indigene of the state, was accused of defrauding unemployed youths by promising them non-existing jobs either in the military or paramilitary outfits in the country.

He was arrested by an undercover team of the NSCDC in Minna after he had allegedly concluded plans to collect a balance of N450,000 for a bar-gained job into the corps.

During investigation by

the civil defence operatives, the suspect reportedly confessed to have carried out the act, pleading for clemency.

Further checks revealed that one of his accomplices in crime identified as Abubakar Ibrahim went into hiding before the long arms of the law could catch up with him and is currently still at large.

Confirming the arrest to *Crime Reports*, the state Commandant, Mr. Philip Ayuba, said that the fake General would soon be arraigned in court after the conclusion of investigation.

Ayuba also disclosed that the command had spread its dragnet with a view to arresting the fleeing Ibrahim, the suspected accomplice in crime of the fake General.



The suspect