

11 persons feared killed as rival gangs clash in Ibadan

•We are yet to ascertain number of casualties —Police

By Oluwale Ige

NO fewer than eleven youths were reportedly killed on Friday when rival gangs from Inalende, Opopoyeosa and Abebi areas of Ibadan, Oyo State capital engaged in a clash, which lasted for several hours, Saturday Tribune reliably gathered.

Though, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of Oyo State Police command, Mr Adewale Osifeso confirmed the incident, he stated that the number of casualties in the clash was yet to be ascertained by the Police authorities.

In a text message forwarded to our correspondent, he stated: "the incident actually happened. However, Investigations are in top gear to establish the number of casualties and circumstances that led to the incident. Meanwhile, additional police operatives have

since been deployed to the scenes to maintain law and order. You would be updated in due course, please."

Checks by *Saturday Tribune* indicated that the Friday's killings were a spillover of recurring violence among the rival gangs in the affected areas, which initially started on Wednesday till Thursday and climaxed on Friday.

Credible sources hinted that members of the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC), whose six members were allegedly killed by the rampaging gangsters on Thursday night, later mobilised their members for reprisal attacks on the youths in the areas.

A neighbour of one of the victims, Qudri Alausa who spoke with journalists over the crisis said that his (victim's) father, Baba Alausa, had given direction that his son's remains be buried in his

Apete house.

He said; "eleven people were killed. Seven Opopoye youths and four OPC members. As I speak with you, the OPC has begun to mobilise their members to attack the Opopoyeosa youths again. In fact, we heard they have told police to steer clear of the area. Just stay where you are. Don't move around, please."

Similarly, another resident of Inalende who spoke on the condition of anonymity said all residents have locked their doors while shops in Opopoyeosa, Inalende and Abebi areas have hurriedly closed for business.

He stated: "It is true. Men of the Operation Burst are everywhere, but they are helpless. Police cannot do anything. We need government to mobilise soldiers to help them. We cannot go to Jumat today. The area is very tense."