

Again, two killed, many injured in Ifon/Ilobu communal clash

Police arrest two suspects

Adeolu Adeyemo/ Osogbo

THE relative peace that returned to Ifon-Osun and Ilobu communities in Osun State was on Monday evening shattered again as warring combatants of both towns engaged themselves in a battle which resulted in two persons losing their lives, while many others were injured.

Although residents of the communities informed the Nigerian Tribune that five persons were killed, the Commissioner for Information, Kolapo Alimi, said two persons were officially known to have died.

Following the resurgence of hostilities between the two communities, Governor Ademola Adeleke has, how-

ever, vowed to remove from office any traditional ruler found to be fanning the embers of violence in the communities.

The governor, who made this known in a statement in Osogbo by his spokesperson, Olawale Rasheed, said the culprits would not go scot-free.

He said intelligence reports were already being gathered on the culpability of prominent leaders from the two communities.

"This time round, those involved will pay the price in line with the law of the land. Those who ignited the attacks in the areas will be rounded up and arraigned accordingly.

"I hosted a virtual security meeting last night. A physical meeting is now ongoing. We will not spare sponsors

of this dastardly act.

"Any traditional ruler found to be fanning the embers of violence will be removed from office. Requisite intelligence is being gathered on the extent of culpability of prominent leaders from the two areas.

"Since yesterday [Monday], I have issued relevant directives which are being implemented to calm the situation. All through the night, security teams have commenced de-escalation operations.

"We have dispatched security teams and further measures will soon be announced," the governor, who was attending a national minimum wage meeting at the State House, Abuja, said.

Meanwhile, investigations in the communities

revealed that the combatants have now shifted their battlegrounds to the boundary between Oyo and Osun states, where the victims were killed and some houses razed.

It was gathered that the battle was waged by warriors armed with guns, cutlasses, daggers, swords, bows and arrows in villages like Idiroko, Wale, Iranyin and Iresa-Adu in Ogbomoso area of Oyo State, which borders the warring communities.

Sources said apart from those killed, about 20 people sustained various degrees of injury, while many village dwellers ran for safety.

The commissioner for information in the state said the bodies of those who lost their lives had been depos-

ited at the Osun State University Teaching Hospital, Osogbo.

Alimi hinted that security operatives deployed in the two communities have been carrying out their assignments dutifully to maintain orderliness, adding that for now, there would be 24-hour surveillance of the communities.

Speaking with the *Nigerian Tribune*, a member of staff of the Osun State University Teaching Hospital, who preferred anonymity said two corpses were deposited at the hospital, adding that they were made to understand that there were still three other dead bodies at the battleground.

Spokesperson for the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Mrs

Kehinde Adeleke, said the command had deployed tactical operatives in the areas to maintain peace.

Meanwhile, the Osun State police command has arrested two suspects in connection with the clashes.

Spokesperson for the police, Mrs Yemisi Opalola, who dropped the hint in a statement in Osogbo, said two persons lost their lives in the clashes and their bodies had been deposited at the mortuary at UNIOSUN Teaching Hospital.

The statement said one Mojeed (surname withheld) and one other person who were arrested with weapons and harmful charms had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) for investigation.