

Three die, 15 injured in Ibadan riot

Akin Oyedele, Ibadan

THREE people, including a policeman, died in Ibadan, Oyo State, on Wednesday, during a fracas between traders at the Ogunpa/Agbeni market.

No fewer than 15 people were injured, seven cars vandalised and goods worth millions of naira destroyed

during the fracas, which was later hijacked by street urchins.

A witness said that one of the urchins, identified as Saka Gentle, was among the dead. The identity of the third victim could not be ascertained at press time on Wednesday.

Seven people were arrested in connection with the

incident.

Sources told journalists that the skirmish was a spillover from a disagreement on Tuesday evening between two groups of traders in the market.

Trouble was said to have started when one of the traders from the fancy (ready made) section of the market engaged in a war of words

with his counterpart from the footwear section over allegations of reckless driving.

It was learnt that a trader at the fancy section was challenged by the trader at the footwear section for driving recklessly to a parking space.

Irked by the challenge a trader allegedly engaged the other trader in an argument that led to a free-for-all.

On Wednesday, the said trader was said to have invited the police to the market to arrest everyone that was involved in the fight.

Following the resistance by the traders at the footwear section of the market, a trader from the other section of the market allegedly employed the services of some street urchins.

Armed with cudgels and other lethal weapons, the hoodlums went on the rampage in the market.

Attempts by the regular policemen to quell the disturbance failed, necessitating the deployment of riot policemen.

The riot policemen, who arrived in an armoured personnel carrier, were said to have shot several canisters of teargas into the market before the violence was contained.

The President of the Ogunpa Central Traders Association, Alhaji Yisa Yagboyaju, told journalists that his attempts to settle the matter amicably were rebuffed by the parties.

He said, "I saw commotion everywhere. People were running helter skelter. The boys were like warriors. I later ran into my shop when it appeared that they were bent on fomenting trouble."

When contacted, the Public Relations Officer, Oyo State Police Command, Mr. Olu Akinmoladun, said he could not confirm whether anyone died in the fracas or not.

Akinmoladun, however, admitted that some people, including policemen, were injured.

He said, "We have restored normalcy in the area. people should go about their normal businesses."



• Riot policemen at Agbeni market, Ibadan, on Wednesday. Inset: A police armoured tank at the scene. Photos: Akin Oyedele.

Petitioners relive bitter memories of Fayose

**Olamilekan Lartey,
Ado Ekiti**

THE name of the suspended governor of Ekiti State, Mr. Ayodele Fayose, sounded repeatedly on Wednesday at the inaugural public sitting of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry set up to probe the activities of the public office holders in the last administration of the state.

Petitioners regaled the commission with bitter

commission.

Ajayi told the commission how Fayose invited him to his office in 2005 and asked him to resign his appointment because he was to be made a state commissioner to represent Emure Local Government Area.

According to him, the suspended governor gave him the paper with which he wrote the resignation.

He told the commission that the resignation was not

voluntary because Fayose directed him to write it the way it suited his purpose.

Ajayi said he was not appointed a commissioner or reinstated to his old post. He, therefore, prayed the commission to redress the injustice he had suffered by giving him back his job.

Also, a former speaker of the suspended House of Assembly, Mr. Sola Ajibolami, described how he was removed as speaker unconsti-

tutionally because he opposed the governor's illegal activities.

He told the commission that the politics of attrition began when the governor foisted on him the Local Government Administration (Amendment) Law 2004 with a view to removing any local government chairman who in the opinion of the governor erred whether or not the offence was known to the law.