

# Religious violence: Soldiers deployed in Sokoto

**S**oldiers and riot policemen were on Friday deployed in Sokoto following the escalation of religious violence in the city.

The deployment followed violent clashes between Shi'ites and Sunnis over Wednesday's killing of Sheikh Umaru Hamza Dan'Maishiyya at the Shehu Juma'at Mosque in Sokoto while preaching. He died in the early hours of Thursday. The Sunni cleric was allegedly killed by members of the Shi'ite sect, especially over his hard stance against the sect.

Agence France Presse reported that mobs torched at least 20 houses on Friday. A witness told AFP by telephone that hundreds of people stormed through four

neighbourhoods of the city "and started burning down the houses in anger."

Also, an attempt by riot policemen to arrest the Sokoto Governor-General of Shi'ites, Mallam Kasimu Rimin Tawaye, culminated in the shooting of two policemen by members of the sect. As a result, soldiers were drafted in around noon and they eventually arrested the governor-general and about 90 of his followers at his residence in Kanwuri Area in Sokoto.

The state commissioner of police, Alhaji Shehu Othman, told the News Agency of Nigeria, "We will sustain the tempo. We are happy that the situation has been brought under control. We arrested the Shiite leader

and 90 of his men at their base after their return from an alleged attack on the Sunni base." The city was reportedly calm following intensified patrol by the military and police, although NAN reports that one person died on Friday during a Shi'ite attack on a Sunni base.

Pandemonium broke out on Thursday when the state acting governor, Muktari Shagari, announced Dan'Maishiyya's death. It was gathered that members of the Shi'ite sect, sensing possible attacks by the Sunnis, staged a demonstration. The situation led to fierce fighting between the two sects until the police intervened.

The Sultan of Sokoto, Sultan Mohammedu Sa'ad Abubakar, had immediately appealed for calm, assuring that the security agencies were investigating the matter. Spokesman of the state police command, Mohammed Umar Dakingari, told BBC Online that two suspects were being held in connection with the shooting of the cleric.

## Tribunal dismisses Agoro's petition against Yar'Adua

**T**he Presidential Election Tribunal sitting in Abuja on Friday dismissed the petition filed by the presidential candidate of the National Action Council, Dr. Olapade Agoro, against the election of

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the petitioner's petition with the grounds for questioning election provided for in the Electoral Act 2006, shows clearly that the petition is completely outside the grounds pro-