

One killed, others injured as Customs, smugglers clash

Ademola Oni, Abeokuta

ONE person died and several others were injured on Wednesday as men of the Nigerian Customs Service engaged smugglers in a shootout in Imeko, a border town in Ogun State.

An eyewitness, a resident of the ancient town in Imeko Afon Local Government Area, told our correspondent that trouble began when the Customs officials intercepted some men in their attempt to smuggle some vehicles from Cotonou through the town.

The witness, who craved anonymity, said, "The Customs men succeeded in seizing the vehicles and wanted to take them to their station.

"On their way, however, another batch of suspected smugglers attacked the Customs men near Imeko motor park to prevent them from taking the vehicles to the Customs office.

"That was when the clash

between the smugglers and the Customs started."

The source added that during the shootout between the warring parties, a local government official, simply known as Demola, was killed by a stray bullet while several others sustained gun shot injuries.

The smuggled vehicles, which were impounded by men of the NCS, were alleged to belong to a top official of the Oodua Peoples Congress in the town.

Youths reject Obasanjo's visit to

Femi Makinde, Akure

FORMER President Olusegun Obasanjo has been declared *persona non grata* in Ondo State following his planned visit to attend the birthday ceremony of Governor Olusegun Agagu on Saturday.

Some youths have flooded Akure, the state capital, with anti-Obasanjo posters since Tuesday when they heard that

In retaliation, a check point of the fleeing Customs men was set ablaze while a motorcycle, whose owner could not be immediately identified, was also burnt.

Our correspondent gathered that the clash caused confusion in the sleepy town as parents rushed to the schools to pick their wards.

The Public Relations Officer of the Ogun State Command of the NCS, Mr. Austin Aiso, confirmed the

incident but explained that the details of the clash were skeletal.

Speaking on the telephone from Ido-Iroko, Aiso said, "It's true that there was a fracas in the town this morning but I can assure you that the situation is under control.

"But we don't have a detailed information on the clash. I know that much later in the day we will have a much detailed information of what happened."

the former President was expected as one of the guests of Agagu.

One of the pamphlets by the Ondo State Progressive Coalition reads in part, "Mr. Obasanjo, note that you and your family members are declared *persona non grata* in Ondo State. Please, in your own interest, stay away from our land."

The group noted that the

former President always caused displeasure anywhere he visited.

The group warned Obasanjo to stay away from Ondo State or be humiliated.

It recalled that during his visit to the state in February 2006, some people were killed in a gun duel that broke out between factions of Peoples Democratic Party's hoodlums.

Obasanjo, according to the

DPA cautions Lagos against demolition of shops, stalls