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### Three killed, houses burnt in Ibadan mayhem

NOVEMBER 24, 2014 BY OLUFEMI ATOYEBI 52 COMMENTS

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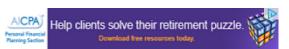
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One of the buildings and a car burnt by thugs in Ibadan ... on Sunday.

| credits: Olufemi Atoyebi



At least three people were killed and 10 houses destroyed by armed youths who invaded Born Photo, Isale Osi, Idi Arere and Popoyemoja in Ibadan South-West Local Government Area of Oyo State.

The youth who operated freely for about two hours before policemen arrived at the scenes, also burnt or vandalised about several vehicles and a 200 shops, tricycle.

Eyewitnesses said the thugs partly burnt a petrol station at Popoyemoja junction.

Our correspondent gathered that the mayhem started at 9am at Born Photo before it spread to Isale Osi, Idi Arere and Popoyemoja.

Residents linked the violence to last Friday's attack in which a policeman was shot dead at a rally by the All Progressives Congress.

One of them said, "Youths hired by politicians released several shots at Born Photo junction. This is a fallout of Friday's violence at the APC rally. This may not be over soon because there could be reprisal. Government must intervene quickly."

Mr. Okunola Asimiyu, whose family house on SW9/263 was burnt on Sunday, wondered why his house was a

He said, "I am not a politician. My father built this house many decades ago. The fight in Oke-Ado three days ago may have led to today's (Sunday) attack on our community. I have no friends among the politicians. I was in the building when the thugs set it on fire . I tried to put off the fire but when I realised that it was spreading, I had to escape."

About five shops in the house were vandalised.

Folake Oladipo, who operated one of the shops, said she lost over N1m.

She added, "I received a call this(Sunday) morning that my shop was burning. I rushed there but I saw people with guns shooting and burning houses. They burnt my refrigerators, generators and looted everything in the shop. I am devastated."

Also destroyed in the building was a football viewing centre. Its operator, Adepoju Owolabi, said football fans

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were lucky to have escaped.

At Popoyemoja junction, a BP petrol station was vandalised and partly burnt. Policemen at the scene said calamity would have happened if the fire had reached the fuel dump.

However, the Caretaker Chairman of Ibadan South-West Council Area, Taoreed Adeleke, blamed the opposition for the attack.

Adeleke said, "Clearly, this is the work of the opposition. They want to scare people during elections and place the blame on the government of the day. We appeal that people should return to their homes. People are not ready to talk; they are scared of mentioning the perpetrators for fear of being attacked.

"I will also blame hoodlums or area boys that are bent on disrupting the peaceful atmosphere in the state for the attack. We heard that the people would come up before the election to make the state ungovernable.

"It started on Friday in Oke Ado and its spreading now. I was called early this (Sunday) morning that the problem had started again so I mobilised security men to stop them."

However, an Accord Party chieftain, Lanre Ogundipe, said the fight was between APC members.

"APC started it among rival groups within the party on Friday. They should not point accusing fingers at any other political party," he said.

The APC Chairman in the state, Akin Oke, in a statement after the violence, called on the police to investigate the attack thoroughly.

Like Adeleke, Oke blamed the mayhem on the opposition.

His statement read in part, "All evidences at APC disposal pointed at a high-level gang-up by some politicians currently at large to embarrass government and to destroy the three and half years of peace in the state.

"We still insist that the persons behind that violence were carrying out a high-level assignment which has to do with the 2015 elections. The violence betrays logic. Why would APC 'thugs', if the allegation of the opposition is to be believed, be involved in shooting the police and not their rival groups? Why did the fomenters of the violence choose the governor's local government and the last day of his meet-the-people tour, as their target?"

The Police Public Relations Officer, Oyo State Police Command, Olabisi Ilobanefor, said the police had yet to make any arrest.

He said the state Commissioner of Police, Kola Sodipo, would address the media over the spate of attacks in the state on Monday (today).

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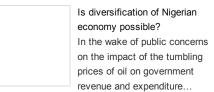


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"It is important to remind the Nigeria Police Force that as a public institution that provides common services for all the arms of government, they must not allow themselves to be used by one of the arms to undermine the others."

Tambuwal was reacting to the directive the IGP reportedly gave to state police commissioners to invite him for questioning.