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3 die as NURTW factions clash in Ibadan

Written by Oluwatoyin Malik, Adebayo Waheed and Saheed Salawu

Thursday, 16 September 2010

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PEACE was, again, disrupted in the city of Ibadan, Oyo State, when factions within the state chapter of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) clashed in the late hours of Tuesday, leading to the death of three people.

The bloody clash, which spilled into the early hours of Wednesday, occurred at the secretariat of the union, at Olomi area of the town.

However, it remains unclear who really kickstarted the clash, as the two factions were pointing accusing fingers at each other as the cause of the skirmish.

According to Alhaji Lateef Salako, a.k.a Eleweomo, those sympathetic to Alhaji Lateef Akinsola Tokyo's faction ambushed his supporters, hijacking some of their vehicles while three of them died as a result of gunshots they received.

One of the victims, one Yekeen Adigun, was reported to have been shot at Academy underbridge area, while he was passing by on his way from Lagos, in a commercial bus.

The names of two other victims were given as Kehinde Adebayo and Kabiru Gbodorogun.

A crowd comprising of NURTW members besieged the state headquarters of Oyo State police command, on Wednesday, to protest what they claimed was a continuous slap on the Eleweomo's faction by the Tokyo faction.

Spotting black bands tied round their heads, some of them, who spoke under anonymity, complained that the police in the state were the ones giving Tokyo's faction an edge over them, by not acting on the reinstated chairman's excesses.

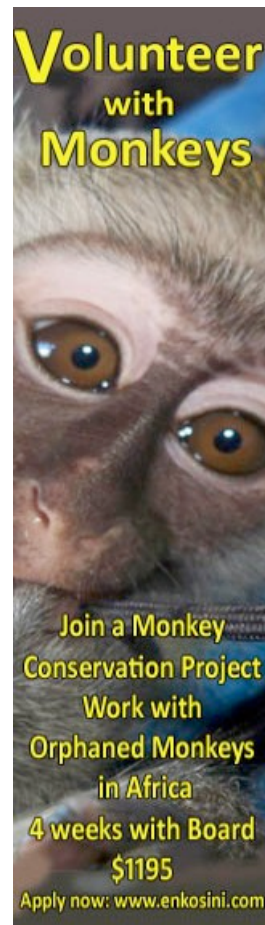
However, a source close to Tokyo disputed the claim that it his faction that killed those whose corpses were being carried about, saying that on the contrary, it was the police that led Eleweomo's faction to the union's secretariat to attack Tokyo's men.

Speaking further, the source, who said about 50 vehicles were shot at where they were parked at the secretariat, stated further that their attackers broke into Tokyo's office, shooting sporadically in all directions, while Tokyo's men scaled the fence to save their lives.

The source alleged the police of complicity as he claimed that they led Eleweomo's men to the union's secretariat, also backed by an Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC).

He added that the APC, which tyre was hit by bullets was removed from the union's office around 11.00 a.m. on Wednesday.

The source stated again that there was no ambush by Tokyo's people as being


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claimed, as the union office was not situated on the expressway, saying that those who died must have been hit by their own bullets.

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However, the Commissioner of Police in Oyo State, Mr Baba Adisa Bolanta, has denied the alleged complicity, saying that he only deployed men to Olomi area to see what was happening after receiving calls from different people that there were shootings at the NURTW secretariat.

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Bolanta said two people were arrested at Ibadan Toll Gate for disturbance and were still being interrogated, while nobody had been arrested for the murder of the three people.

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He warned that that the police would not allow a few miscreants to take the people of the state hostage by their actions.