

# CITY SCOPE

## Two feared killed as thugs invade Oba's palace

By By Albert Akpor

**B**ARIGA, a densely populated suburb in Lagos State was turned into a theater of war following a bloody clash between two rival political thugs resulting in the gruesome murder of two persons. Over eight other unidentified persons sustained gun shot wounds while many vehicles including those belonging to the Oba of Bariga, His Royal Majesty, Oba Jagunmolu the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Gbolahan Akanbi Timson were touched. His 9-year-old son, Toyin and senior wife are presently recuperating in an undisclosed hospital in Lagos Island following injuries sustained when the rampaging thugs allegedly accompanied by a detachment of the police from Bariga Division led by a Sergeant invaded the Palace and threw them out of the second floor of the Palace. Those who were shot dead allegedly in the fracas were identified as Taofeek Adekanbi, 19 years and Tokunbo Omolaja, 26. Toafiq reportedly had his head shattered while his stomach was ripped open following volleys of bullets pumped into his body allegedly by the police.

City scope investigation revealed that trouble actually started at the resident of a one-time local government chairman and a former Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) stalwart who later decamped to the Action Congress (AC) (names withheld). However, it was gathered that there was hot exchange of words between his former 'boys' while he was in PDP and his present loyalists in AC.

The argument soon degenerated into a fight with members of both gang sustaining body injuries.

However, the other group, city scope was told, regrouped two days after and commenced a house to house man-hunt and maiming members of the other group.

However, the rampaging thugs allegedly stormed the Oba's Palace when it was discovered that one person who reportedly participated in an earlier fight in the resident of the powerful politician was a relation of the royal father.

They invaded the Palace and destroyed virtually everything at sight. Not even the presence of armed policemen from Pedro Division and Bariga could make any positive impact as the thugs who were wielding dangerous weapons including pump action guns fired indiscriminately at innocent persons.

A particularly known notorious thug who has a murder charge hanging on his neck at the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID) Panti Yaba, Lagos, was reported to be visibly seen distributing arms to the thugs.

Narrating how his son Toyin and wife were hospitalized, Oba Timson who said he was out of Lagos when the clash

was aimed at causing commotion in his area and fingered a powerful Lagos traditional ruler whom he said has very strong roots in the Police Force and who does not want him as the Oba of Bariga, as the mastermind.

Continuing, the royal father said, "it is very, very clear that the fight transcended mere political affiliation because why would they come to my Palace. This is the unseen hand of this traditional ruler

geant accompanied the thugs and they started shooting live bullets directly at the people. It was after Taofeek and Tokunbo were killed that my senior wife who was at the time writhing in pains jumped up because she knows the Police Sergeant very well. She was shouting and challenging the thugs to kill her instead of mowing down innocent people. When the Sergeant noticed that there might not be a hiding place for him,

nounced me Oba in 2002 and this Oba got some people to himself and they challenged the ruling at the Appeal Court. And this year, the Appeal court struck out the suit and ordered that the *status quo* remains."

Oba Gbolahan Timson who said he had already alerted the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mike Okiro on the activities of the Sergeant and his cohorts said, "I cannot die in silence. I was reliably informed that there was a third hand in the entire clash and that I should look for a way to protect my entire household. Somebody is trying to stop the police from protecting me and my Palace.

Not even the peace moves of the present Chairman of Bariga Local Government Area, Mr. Sulaiman Omoyele Oris to settle the perceived animosity in the community have yielded the required results as the politician would always avoid any such meeting. The politician's grouse with me stemmed from the fact that I opposed his continued chairmanship of Bariga and he quickly aligned with the Lagos monarch to cause trouble for me.

Can't you see that they are all out to make my reign unbearable? Any time I request for police protection as a traditional ruler, it is technically turned down because of the influence of this ex-police officer and traditional ruler."

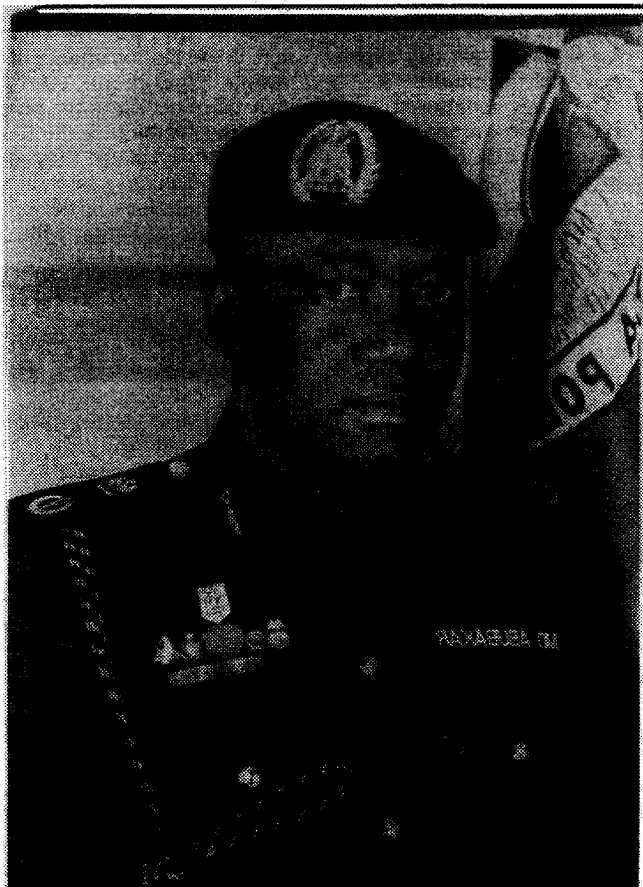
When City scope visited the palace, scores of sympathizers were spotted going round the Palace to assess extent of damage. A middle-aged woman who would not want her names in print described Oba Timson as, 'a detribalized man of the people and peace-loving who does not discriminate'.

"Any time you call on him, his doors are always open. I am an Igbo woman doing business here in Bariga and I know what I am talking about. This place is peaceful and we are happy doing business here. How can people just storm the Palace of an Oba and wants to kill his wife and son. You cannot do that to an Obi in Igboland. We love this Oba because he is such a down to earth person."

Frantic efforts to get the Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Olabode Ojajuni to speak on the incident which incidentally took place the day the Inspector-General of Police Mr. Mike Okiro visited Lagos since assumption of officer failed.

But a source close to his office confirmed the clash and added that two people were arrested with arms and ammunition during the clash.

The source further said the suspects who were initially arrested and detained at Pedro Station had since been transferred to the SCID Panti without the arms and ammunition recovered from them.



Mr. M.D. Abubakar, new Commissioner of Police, Lagos State.

who had done every thing humanly possible to stop my Obaship of Shomolu. He even went as far as writing to the state government that I was a criminal and an ex-convict and therefore, should not be given the staff of office as the Oba of Bariga. He even promised the state government that he would furnish them with relevant documents to support his claims within two weeks of his letter.

But for several months now he could not substantiate his devilish claims. Imagine a situation whereby police men who came to quell a bloody clash soon withdrew from the scene leaving residents at the mercy of the thugs. And just minutes later another group of policemen led by a Ser-

he quickly beat a retreat and hurriedly left the scene. But before this, the two boys had been killed while several others including one Sunday Uyo were shot and seriously wounded

"Respite later came when the Area Commander of 'Area H' ACP Oyenekwe and his team arrived the scene. If not for ACP Oyenekwe, may be these people would have wiped out my entire household by now.

I have been reliably informed that the Sergeant is on the pay roll of a traditional ruler and like I said, I would have been in jail now if former Governor of Lagos State Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu had listened to this traditional ruler. The Lagos High Court pro-

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