



**Commissioning.** r-l: Delta State governor, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan, with Chief Ighoyoya Amori, during the commissioning of Mosoga palm wine market yesterday

# 60 feared killed in another Ibadan torture chamber

•92 rescued, 9 suspects arrested

**OLA AJAYI**  
Ibadan

**A**BOUT sixty people were said to have died and buried in a newly-discovered illegal detention camp in Ojoo area of Ibadan. This brings to 62 the number of people alleged to have been tortured to death by the founders of the three illegal detention camps discovered so far in the ancient city. Nine suspects have been arrested. Acting on a tip-off, men of the Special Anti Robbery Squad (SARS) stormed the camp on Friday and rescued 92 victims including children who have allegedly spent many years there. There were bruises all over their bodies. Among them were six girls who were alleged to have been sexually abused.

When *Sunday Vanguard* spoke with some of the inmates, they alleged that the prime suspect, Mohammed Olore, who claimed to be an Islamic cleric, only used the school to cover up, adding that he engaged in selling parts of those who died among them to influential people who patronized him. They pointed out that at least two to three people died within a month through torture and they were always taken to Sasa Cemetery for burial by the 'cleric' who later removed their parts and sold them. *Sunday Vanguard* also gathered that some people including a mobile policeman from Arowomole in Ogbomoso were kidnapped and detained at the camp. The arrest of the prime suspect and his collaborators almost led to a full-blown confrontation between the police and loyalists of the suspects.

Oyo State police commissioner, Prince Udom Ekpoudom, while parading eleven suspects in Ibadan, in connection with the case, said "the experience at the scene was unbelievable and the treatment given to their captives, 90 per cent of them, was dehumanizing. Six of the hostages who are females complained that they were subjected to series of sexual acts against their wish. It was also

discovered that illegal abortions were carried out on pregnant inmates in the camp. It was a situation where human beings were shrunk to skeletal frame with severe burns and rashes. Grievous inhuman treatment usually resulted in multiple deaths of the inmates who were subsequently buried without any report to the police. The hostages in unison confessed that bodies of deceased inmates were usually eaten by their captors."

The police boss, an assistant inspector general of police, AIG, confirmed that some influential people had been pestering him to release the suspects arrested earlier at Olomi in connection with illegal detention but he would not be cowed into releasing them without being tried by the court. But the prime suspect in the latest torture chamber, denied all the allegations, saying they were made to disparage his person.

**H**e stated that "the policemen came to our Olore Islamic School at Ojoo and arrested me and my students. We don't kill in our place as alleged. The motive for establishing the school, he stated, was to heal numerous people who are mentally deranged. Also, we teach them Quran."

On the allegation of torture, he confessed that those who misbehaved were beaten but said none of them died except the two who were sick and taken to their parents. "We also beat them when they escaped. Somebody yet to be cured of insanity but ran away would be beaten when caught. The allegations they were leveling against me are false. I did not beat anybody to death. All they are saying is just to implicate me. They are saying that just to paint me black. The water and the bones that were said to have been taken from the bodies of those that died should be taken to the doctors for examination to ascertain whether it is true or not. If anybody is sick, we hand him over to his parents to take care of him. Two of them died in the custody of their

parents."

One of the suspects, Sherif Salami, who was alleged to have killed more than fifteen inmates, also denied the allegation, saying they were unfounded and malicious. According to him, "they are lying. They brought me too to the place just like any of them. What they are saying is to implicate me so that they can be released. This is my eighth year in this school." When asked why all the inmates were accusing him of having killed about fifteen people, he noted that it was because they did not like him since he was always punishing them when they erred. "We beat them when they erred. It is a lie that some people died. Anytime any of them fell sick, his parents were invited to come and treat him."

The suspects who are helping the police in their investigations, besides Olore and Salami, are Dauda Atanda, Mohammed Adeyemi, Yusuf Owolabi, Ismail Balogun Lukman Olalekan, Alfa Taye Ogunlofin and Adeola Adeniyi. Among the callers at the police station yesterday were the Are Musulumi of Yorubaland, Alhaji Azeez Arisekola, and the former Commissioner for Justice in the administration of Senator Rashidi Ladoja, Barrister Adebayo Shittu.

## Tribunal nullifies David Mark's election

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the Senate president on the grounds that he (Abubakar) secured the majority of the votes cast in seven of the nine LGAs of the district, noting that the results from Agatu and Okpokwu LGAs were cancelled and that the alleged malpractices and intimidation of voters in the two LGAs were enough to vitiate the outcome of exercise.

The petitioner contended that having secured 188,634 votes as against the PDP's 188,374 in seven LGAs of the senatorial zone, he ought to have been declared the winner of that election by INEC.

Mark, reacting to the judgement, yesterday, said he would appeal.

## Yar'Adua, Buhari, Atiku trade words

**BEN AGANDE, EMMA AZIKEN & LEON USIGBE,** Abuja

**B**ARELY 48 hours to the judgement on the petitions filed by the presidential candidate of Action Congress, AC, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, and his All Nigeria Peoples Party, ANPP, counterpart, Major General Muhammadu Buhari, against the election of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, the president has boasted that he would floor his two rivals in the April 21, 2007 presidential election again.

Buhari immediately weekend cautioned Yar'Adua who he advised to be ready to leave the Aso Rock seat of power on the grounds that the president's election would be annulled by the presidential election petition tribunal. The tribunal had last week fixed Tuesday for its verdict, a couple of weeks after it ended sitting and reserved judgement indefinitely. On the part of Atiku, he was optimistic that the tribunal will void the presidential election. The former vice president asked Yar'Adua to be prepared for a fresh election.

Buhari and Atiku accepted the reality that a possible re-run of the election could hold with the president of the Senate, Senator David Mark, sitting as acting president of the country. Yar'Adua, who spoke through two of his aides, in Abuja, weekend, was confident that his election would be upheld by the tribunal because he is the legitimate custodian of the mandate of the Nigerian people. The aides spoke anonymously. "President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua will once again floor Alhaji Atiku and General Buhari," one of the presidential aides told *Sunday Vanguard*.

According to the aide, the president was not perturbed by the impending judgement because he "believes honestly that he won the election and has gone ahead to prove it at the tribunal. Let me tell you that the president is not under any pressure because he believes genuinely and is convinced that he is the legitimate custodian of the overwhelming mandate of the Nigerian people. But as a man who believes in the rule of law, he is ready to abide by any decision of the tribunal and when he gets to that bridge he would cross it", the aide said. He explained that Yar'Adua had

refrained from speaking on the matter because "as far as we are concerned, the matter is subjudice and commenting on it now would be misconstrued as interfering in the affairs of the judiciary by political opponents of the president. But let me tell you that the president is not fazed by the impending judgement. He is going about his normal duties and is ready to fulfill his campaign promises to the Nigerian people. Those who think that the president would lose sleep because of the judgment do not know the man. He believes absolutely in the judiciary and God who gives and takes power".

Asked what will happen if the tribunal ruled against the president, the aide stated: "The overwhelming display of goodwill by Nigerians towards this government has given us confidence that they will re-elect the president if he contests again. President Umaru Yar'Adua has always maintained that there are flaws in our electoral process and he has taken practical steps to correct them. Even if the tribunal orders re-election, it would serve as an avenue for the president to practise what he has been preaching to ensure that the elections are free and fair".

**O**n the elevation of the chairman of the tribunal to the Supreme Court at a time the tribunal was set to deliver judgment, the aide noted that appointments into the apex court are done by the president on the recommendation of the National Judicial Council. "Should the president have declined to forward the recommendation of the National Judicial Council because the person so recommended is handling a case?"

Should the country's apex court come to a stand still because the president has a case at the tribunal? Those who are making such insinuations that the appointment is meant to influence the tribunal chairman are not only unfair to the president, they are being diversionary and myopic in their thinking", he said. The other aide, who served during the Obasanjo administration, also, dismissed the allegation that the president was panicky because of the impending judgment. "Why should the president panic? Who campaigned more than Yar'Adua prior to the elections? President Yar'Adua's credentials remain unassailable and in the last eight months that he has been in office,

he has won the confidence of Nigerians the more and his election, barring the little hitches here and there, is not in doubt and we are positive that it would be upheld by the tribunal", he said.

Since Tuesday was announced as the date for the judgment, last week, there have been series of meetings in Abuja by aides of the president on the implication of the tribunal verdict. The meetings were said to be coordinated by the secretary to the government of the federation, Alhaji Babagana Kingibe, and allegedly involved the leadership of the opposition ANPP. According to a source who claimed to have attended one of the meetings, the involvement of the ANPP was to persuade the national chairman of the party, Chief Edwin Ume-Ezoke, not to be Buhari's running mate in the event that the tribunal orders a re-run of the election.

"The understanding is that since Buhari may not be allowed to bring in another running mate and Ume-Ezoke has publicly said that he was no longer interested in being his running mate, he would be technically knocked out from contesting since he cannot field a new running mate", the source said. Ume-Ezoke would not attend to press inquiries on the matter, weekend, as he claimed to be in a meeting when *Sunday Vanguard* contacted him on phone. But Buhari, whose prayer before the tribunal is for Yar'Adua's election to be voided and he declared as the winner of the April 2007 poll, asked the president to be ready to vacate office.

**T**he ANPP candidate's spokesman, Mallam Sule Hamman, told *Sunday Vanguard*, weekend, in Abuja: "The decision on Tuesday is a decision about the future of Nigeria as a country and the future of democracy in Africa.

"Obviously, we went to court to challenge the election and establish before the tribunal that there was no credible election in accordance with the electoral law and the constitution of the country. Our minimum expectation is that it will be so accepted. Mr President should be ready to vacate office," Hamman pointed out.

While affirming that Buhari will definitely appeal against a negative judgment, he said the ANPP candidate would form a government of national unity should Yar'Adua not appeal against a ruling in favour of the ANPP. "Definitely, we are ready to form a government, we are ready to take over power and that is why we are in politics, we have programmes, we have been anticipating that we will take over power. "In the first place, we intend to speak to everybody and we intend to have an all inclusive government in the interest of national unity and stability as long as people are willing to sign up to our programme."

On Buhari's readiness to accept Mark as acting president, he said: "No, as far as we are concerned, we are fighting for constitutional government, government that is anchored on the principle of the rule of law as provided and established through transparent and free and fair elections. "I do understand the difficulty but we do not want to recommend anything outside the constitution. In any case, the constitution provides for Senate President. If

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Citing section 69(c) of Electoral Act 2006 which empowered the electoral officer to cancel the result of an election but noted that the power to reverse same lies with the tribunal, he said: "the decision of the electoral officer in

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