

Tension as policeman allegedly kills soldier

LAGOS—UNEASY calm now prevails at Orile-Iganmu in Lagos following the killing of a soldier allegedly by a police inspector on Wednesday.

It was learnt that the incident happened after a disagreement between the soldier and the police officer.

Witnesses said the soldier, who was in mufti but wore his beret, was allegedly shot by the policeman during the disagreement.

"The shooting happened when the soldier who was riding in a commercial bus came out to challenge a police patrol team that wanted to conduct a routine check on the vehicle.

"It was in the process that the police inspector mistakenly shot the soldier, though he didn't die on the spot.

"The soldier was immediately rushed to a hospital while the policeman was handcuffed and taken away after an Area Commander visited the scene," a witness claimed.

However, it was learnt that some soldiers stormed the Orile-Iganmu Police Station that night in a reprisal attack on the station.

Following the intervention of a Police Area Commander, there was no confrontation between the soldiers and the police.

When the station was visited yesterday, a detachment of soldiers from the Lagos State Government, "*OPERA-*

TION MESA," had taken over the area.

It was gathered that the soldiers were mobilised to avert any possible reprisals by colleagues of the dead soldier.

The soldiers controlled traffic on the chaotic Lagos/Badagry expressway, while civilians massed on the nearby pedestrian bridge watching the situation.

Pedestrians who gathered on the foot bridge, in anticipation of a possible confrontation between the soldiers and policemen, were later dispersed by the soldiers.

Policemen and women attached to the station were not immediately visible, although some plain-clothes officers were seen inside the station.

Mr. Frank Mba, Police/Public Relations Officer, Lagos State Command, confirmed the incident when contacted.

"Yes, there was a shooting incident at Orile-Iganmu on Wednesday, but I don't have any further details concerning the incident," Mba, a Superintendent said.

He said the soldiers' presence was a joint initiative of the Army and Police authorities to ensure peace and security were not compromised.

Mba added that the Police and the Army had similar objectives, pointing out that others should not be made to suffer from the mistake of an individual.