

Riot in Ibadan, as runaway smugglers hit two siblings, kill one

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SOME irate youths took to the street in Ibadan on Tuesday to protest a fatal automobile accident in Samonda area of the city during which two siblings were hit by smugglers in their attempt to escape arrest.

The two boys, identified as Opeyemi and Timilehin Olatubosun, reportedly left their home in the morning on the way to school only to be knocked down by the ravag-

ing smugglers who increased their acceleration to beat security check point almost opposite a petrol filling station at Samonda area.

Trouble, it was gathered, started at about 7.15 a.m. when some armed riot policemen on duty at the check point attempted to stop a four-vehicle convoy of men suspected to be smugglers of used vehicles ("Tokunbo").

According to one Ismaila Emiola, who was at the scene of the incident, three of the

smugglers drove on top speed against the traffic at the time of the incident, alleging that the policemen started shooting when it became obvious that the suspects would not stop.

While trying to escape, he explained, one of the vehicles in the convoy of the suspected smugglers hit the two boys who were crossing the road on their way to their school.

Timilehin, said to be nine year old died on the spot while his brother, Opeyemi, aged six, was said to have had a fracture

on one of his arms.

The incident reportedly infuriated some youths in the area who immediately mobilised and mounted bonfires on the highway, causing heavy traffic snarl on the ever busy Mokola-Sango-UI-Ojoo road.

The irate mob, who took to the street because of the popularity of the mother of the children literally brought life to a standstill in the area as they insisted that the police should account for why the smugglers could not be arrested, alleging

complicity in the issue.

A combined team of armed policemen and men of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) supported by an armoured personnel carrier (NPF 1207 C) was later deployed to the troubled spot before normalcy could return.

Tear gas canisters were fired by the security agents to disperse the irate youths and in the process, three students of a private school in the area fainted, but were revived.