

Gunmen shoot butcher dead inside Lagos barracks market

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File photo: Masked gunmen

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There was pandemonium on Saturday after some yet-to-be-identified gunmen stormed the military barracks in the Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State and shot dead a butcher identified simply as Ridwan.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the attack occurred around 8 am in the Mammy Market section of the barracks.

It was gathered that the assailants, numbering about four, entered the busy market and fired several shots into the air.

This was said to have caused traders and their customers to flee in different directions.

After the brief chaos, the gunmen reportedly headed straight to Ridwan's stall and opened fire on him multiple times.

Eyewitnesses told our correspondent who visited the market on Sunday that the attack happened within minutes.

One of the traders who identified himself as Mummy Blessing said, "We were just opening for business when we heard gunshots. Everyone left what they were doing and ran away. Before we knew it, the men who were wearing masks went straight to where Ridwan was selling meat, shot him, and fled. When we all came back, we saw him in a pool of blood."

During the visit by *PUNCH Metro*, Ridwan's meat stall was seen to be located close to a corner in the market. His absence also left the stall empty as other traders beside him went about their businesses.

Another eyewitness said the location of the stall aided the operation of the assailants.

"The men were very close to Ridwan's stall when they started firing gunshots. So while everyone ran away, Ridwan could not find an escape route. That was how they successfully killed him," the eyewitness, identified simply as Musa, disclosed.

Efforts made to save his life proved abortive as he was said to have been rejected at the medical facility in the barracks.

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"He was quickly carried into a tricycle and rushed to the barracks clinic, but when they got there, he was rejected and referred somewhere else. It was later in the day that we learnt he had died," another trader who did not want his name in print for personal reasons disclosed.

Meanwhile, there were speculations that the attack was carried out by suspected cultists.

The deceased was also said to have been buried by the family according to Islamic rites.

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When contacted, the spokesperson for the Lagos State Police Command, Abimbola Adebisi, said she was not aware of the development.

“I am not aware, and no such incident has been reported at the Onireke Police Station, which falls under the jurisdiction. However, the CP has tasked the tactical squad on continuous patrol and also added more officers in his determination to stamp out cultism and related crimes across the state,” she said.

The spokesperson for the 81 Division of the army, Olabisi Ayeni, could not be reached as calls made to his telephone line were not responded to. A text message sent to him had yet to be replied to as of the time this report was filed.

PUNCH Metro reported in September that four people were killed, while a stray bullet injured a 14-year-old boy, after gunmen attacked a crowded snooker spot near a military barracks in the Ojo area of the state.

It was learnt that the incident occurred at the Onireke bus-stop, where the snooker spot is located.

The assailants were said to have stormed the area around 9 pm, headed straight to the location, and opened fire on the people present.

Among the casualties was a noodles vendor who was said to have died on the spot.

The killing has heightened tension in the area, with some residents calling for increased security presence within and around the barracks to prevent a recurrence.