

Trader killed as violence erupts in Rivers market

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By Dennis Naku

A clash between members of the Benue and Hausa communities at a fruit market in Oil Mill, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State has left one person dead.

Sunday PUNCH gathered that the incident began when a trader asked a wheelbarrow pusher, identified as Zakara Afaaruwu, to move his wheelbarrow to make space for goods.

Afaaruwu allegedly refused, sparking an argument that quickly drew other traders and onlookers

It was gathered that the disagreement escalated when Afaaruwu allegedly pulled out a knife and stabbed the trader, identified as Hightor Wenem, aged 30, from Mbagel Village, Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State.

The spokesperson for the state police command, Grace Iringe-Koko police, in a statement issued in Port Harcourt on Saturday, said the trader was rushed to the hospital but was confirmed dead by a doctor.

She said the development immediately sparked a clash between members of the Benue and Hausa community in the area.

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Iringe-Koko said, “Preliminary investigation revealed that a trader at the market, while attempting to create more space for his goods, requested a wheelbarrow pusher identified as Zakara Afaaruwu (male) to remove his wheelbarrow which was obstructing the area.

The request was refused, and an argument ensued.

“In the course of the disagreement, the wheelbarrow pusher allegedly stabbed the trader, identified as Hightor Wenem ‘m’ aged 30 years, from Mbagel Village, Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State, with a dagger.

“The incident led to tension and pandemonium between members of the Hausa and Benue communities in the area. However, prompt intervention by police operatives restored calm and prevented further breakdown of law and order.”

The police spokesperson added that the suspect had been arrested, while investigation was ongoing.