

Bloody day in Lagos

• 2 dead, Ladipo Market shut, police take charge

LUKEY ABAWURU and
BONNY AMADI



NUAL CONFAB... President, Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN), Mrs Seyi Ijaturoti and her deputy, Mr Adeyemo Adejumo at the 35th annual education conference and exhibition in Abuja.

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The police have also arrested 16 persons who allegedly masterminded the crisis just as the wounded victims were receiving medical attention at various hospitals in the state.

Meanwhile, Lagos State governor, Bola Ahmed Tinubu yesterday ordered that the market be shut indefinitely and empowered the police to take full control of the market until further notice.

A statement by Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Mr Kehinde Bamigbetan also advised citizens to keep off the area as "anyone found loitering in the premises will be severely dealt with."

Daily Champion learnt that several vehicles were burnt and shops vandalized by the *Area Boys*.

An eyewitness said trouble started in the morning yesterday at Aguiyi Ironsi Shopping Complex, popularly known as Panama in the market when the landlord attempted to evict some tenants.

The witness said the landlord who was wounded in the fracas has been hospitalised as at press time. He was reportedly confronted by some of the tenants who mobilized some *Area Boys*, loyal to them, to attack their landlord.

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DP suspends Imo Speaker

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DP suspended ... no speaker

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He added that the face-off at Panama Complex, however sparked off mixed reactions as miscreants loyal to the landlord also regrouped for a reprisal attack, resulting commotion.

The stampede following the clash led to the closure of shops and stalls in the market.

Traders and other people in the market scamped for safety as the crisis spread to other parts of the market.

Daily Champion investigation further revealed that the deceased, whose identities were not yet known, were Area Boys loyal to the landlord.

Chief John Nwosu, vice chairman of Ladipo Market Traders Association said, "this morning, at about 10am, we got the information that there was fracas at Panama Complex.

"We learnt that the owner of that market complex, son of Hassan Olajoku came with some thugs to evict the 'hoodlums' that were terrorizing

Bloody day

the complex, but the people through their leader resisted and fought back".

On the casualty figure, Nwosu said, "We have been hearing rumour that people died in the crisis but I have not confirmed, I know that the landlord sustained severe injury and has been rushed to hospital."

Mr. P. Nneto, Task Force chairman of Ladipo Main Market Traders Association, said the cause of the riot was between Panama Ventures and the hoodlums and not the whole market but regretted that it spread to the entire market forcing people to close shops and flee for dear life.

He said: "The problem is from Panama Ventures. I don't know what they are dragging there.

Because of that they brought in touts from Mushin, Oshodi and other places who fought

with cutlasses and other dangerous weapons."

Confirming the incident, Police spokesman, Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, a deputy superintendent of police, said: "I am not aware that people died but I know that people were wounded and we have arrested 16 of them. They are in the police net and our men (police) have taken control."

He said, the crisis was triggered off by traders in the market over what he described as "leadership tussle."

According to him, some factions protested the continued existence of "task force" in the market after expiration of the incumbent's tenure.

Ojajuni said the traders clashed over elongation of the tenure of the task force, adding that hoodlums took advantage of that to cause mayhem in the market.

Ojajuni further warned traders, to desist from acts that would cause the breach of peace in the market.

FUTURE GENERATIONS, HE SAID.

Archbishop Akinola stated that the aptness of the conference at this time is informed in that the Anglican Communion found out that after 47 years of independence, the great vision of Nigeria's founding fathers is still lost in the wilderness of greed, corruption and self seeking motives.

He said "our rediscovery tells us that after 47 years of independence in this country, the great vision of our founding fathers is lost in the wilderness of greed, corruption and self seeking that pervades almost every facet of our national life."

He said due to this situation, the Anglican Church in Nigeria is perplexed because the virtues of hardwork, integrity, honesty and patriotism that the nations founding fathers exemplified seem to be lost in these "perilous days".

Some eminent Nigerians, expected at the conference include Chief Ernest Shonekan, former head of state, Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives, Austin Opara and Mr. Silas Yisa, Director General, National Broadcasting Commission.