

5 die sharing N60,000 gift from politician

AT least five suspected political thugs were feared dead in Ishaga area of Agege, Lagos while allegedly sharing money given to them by an unidentified politician in the state. The politician left immediately after handing over the money to the leader of the thugs, identified as Lekan

• Daily Champion gathered that six persons were injured while three vehicles were torched in the fracas that resulted from the sharing of the money.

An eyewitness said trouble started when some thugs who were not present when the politician handed over the money at the place requested to be joined in the sharing; a request that was turned down.

Our source said the refusal of one of the factions to extend the sharing to others resulted in a free for all.

He said attempts by some loyalists of the politician to pacify the two factions with a promise to get more money for them proved abortive as those who were in possession of the money refused to share with those that were absent at the time the money was given to them.

The Lekan faction insisted that the money was given to them as ordinary gift.

They said they had approached the politician who then doled out N60, 000 to them.

"The money is for only some of us that were present. It was a gift from our Baba. We saw him and greeted him and based on how Baba God touched his heart he gave us the money. He didn't ask us to do anything for him but for us to share among ourselves. From the amount he gave to us, it appeared that he counted us before giving the money. I explained to others who came later when the man had driven

out, that the money was meant for 11 of us but they insisted that they were part of the money and we said no," Lekan said.

Another witness said the politician gave the money to the thugs to enable them support him during the forth coming election in the state.

The source who also pleaded for anonymity said although the other faction was not present at the time the money was given, they ought to benefit from the money since all of them would assist the politician during the election in the area.

He said Lekan's group had recently benefited from similar gift when a land speculator gave them money to protect his land against intruders. "We shared the money to all of us including those that were not there but when it came to their hands, they refused to comply with the others".

However Lagos state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Mr. Samuel Jinadu said calm has since returned to the area. He said he has not been properly briefed on the matter but confirmed the death of one person. He said police are investigating the case with a view to finding out what led to the breach of peace in the place.

CLEMENT NWOJI, Abuja

MINISTER of Finance, Mr. Olusegun Aganga yesterday in Abuja confessed that the establishment of the Excess Crude Account (ECA) in 2004 was a major weakness in the nation's fiscal policies.

He said the weakness arose from the lack of legal framework in the way of legislation backing up the