

Thursday, Jan 13th | Last update 08:06:32 PM GMT |

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Kaduna: 1 feared dead, scores wounded in clash

Saturday, 08 January 2011 14:05

Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

THE peaceful atmosphere in Rigasa, a suburb of Kaduna metropolis was shattered yesterday when a fight broke out between Darika and Shi'ite Islamic sects over preaching in Rigasa Juma'at Mosque. One person was feared killed, while scores sustained various degrees of injuries in a clash that lasted for hours even as a house and the Faudiya Islamic School belonging to the Shi'ite group were burnt.

Weekly Trust gathered that the quick intervention of the men of the Operation Yaki joint security outfit quenched the fight, which started immediately after Jumma'at prayer created tension in the metropolis. Speaking to our correspondent, a leader of the Shi'ite Islamic sect, Bashir Aminu blamed the mosque management committee for the crisis. "We have been preaching in the mosque for the past 20 years, but the committee directed that we should stop and they appointed somebody from the other sect to be preaching there. After prayers, while we were going back for our business, they started hurling stones at us," he said.

Aminu said many of their sect members were seriously injured and that their Islamic school and one of their member's houses were burnt.

However, a member of the Darika sect, Malam Alhaji Sani Aliyu pushed the blame to the Shi'ites, saying they were the ones that started hurling stones on members of Darika. He said they injured many of their sect members with stones and cutlasses. "The committee of the mosque is not satisfied with their preaching and that was why they appointed one Mallam Zagina to be preaching in the mosque," he said. As at the time filing this report, policemen have assumed guard at the mosque. When contacted, Kaduna State Police Commissioner, Alhaji Ballah M. Nassarawa, confirmed the incident, saying the situation is under control.

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