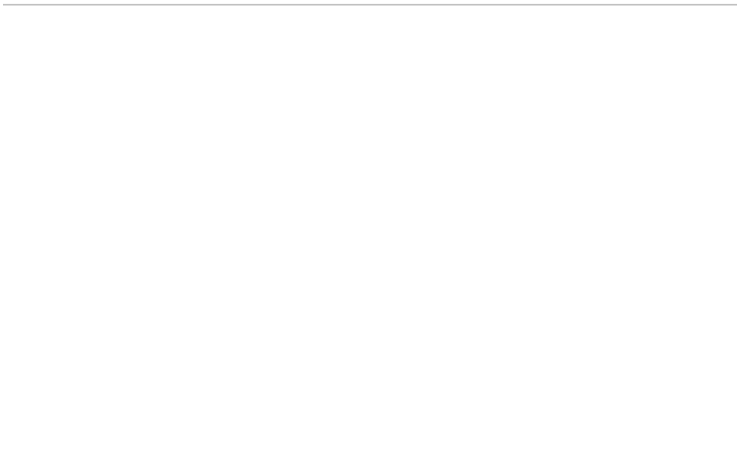


4 Killed, 20 Arrested In Lagos Cult War



Lagos NURTW war

By Eugene Agha

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No fewer than four persons were killed while many were injured in a renewed bloody clash between followers of two factional leaders of the National Union of Transport Workers (NURTW), which occurred at the weekend at Lagos Island.

Three persons were feared killed as at Friday evening. The fourth person was allegedly macheted to death on Saturday morning and his body was left by the side of the road for all to see.

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The fight erupted between supporters of Kunle Poly and Mustapha Seggo over who controls Eyin Eyo unit at the Idumota area of Lagos Island.

Many persons, including some traders, sustained varying degrees of injuries while scampering to safety.

Authoritative sources revealed that the two factions have been at loggerhead, leading to constant clashes in the recent past.

A trader said: "Kunle Poly boys are the one collecting dues from commercial bus drivers, while Seggo boys control the Idumota main park and those on parts of the popular Carter Bridge.

"It was the Seggo boys who intentionally invaded the area with the intention to take over the area but met stiff resistance, which led to the death of a member of Kunle Poly boys on Thursday evening."

Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Adekunle Ajisebutu, who confirmed the crisis, said 20 persons had since been arrested for their alleged involvement in the fracas.

Ajisebutu said it was the quick intervention of the police on the Island that quelled the unrest and allowed members of the public to pass with hands raised up.

There is palpable tension in the area following the resolve by Kunle boys to stage a reprisal attack.

Daily Trust learnt that one of the deceased was macheted to death with axes by the Seggo boys.

However, the Seggo boys also suffered severe casualties where many of them are now receiving treatment at undisclosed hospitals.

Footages on social networking service, Twitter, showed residents running helter-skelter, with sporadic gunshots heard.

Idumota Market is one of the oldest and arguably one of the largest markets in West Africa with thousands of lock-up shops occupying various buildings in the market. The market, along with Alaba International Market, is a major distribution hub for home videos and music in Lagos State and one of the biggest in Nigeria.

Meanwhile, the Lagos State Government has appealed to the NURTW to end their violence.

The government appealed to the union to desist from destruction, which gives credence to insinuations that Lagos allows hoodlums and criminals.

In a statement, Gbenga Oyerinde, Special Adviser to Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu on Central Business Districts urged warring factions to embrace peace.

Oyerinde attributed the violence to "Infiltration of the area by street gangs and hoodlums from other parts of the state into the island under the guise of membership of NURTW".

The aide noted that the government "is doing all within its power to restore the peace of the area".