

Alaba market leaders confirm three deaths, 28 injured persons in clash with Agberos

By Bertram Nwankanna

Shut market to protect lives, property

THE leadership of Alaba International Market, Lagos, yesterday, confirmed that three people were killed, while 28 others were injured in the violent clash that erupted between traders and tax collectors.

Justifying the shutting down of the market, Chairman of Alaba International Amalgamated Traders Association, Chief Amajuoyi

Camilus, said the injured victims were also hospitalised in a facility at Ojo, Lagos.

Camilus, who confirmed the figure, while briefing newsmen in the association's office, yesterday, said the Agberos came to the market in their large numbers with guns, cutlasses, cudgels and other dangerous weapons, shooting, killing and maiming both buyers, traders and all those who were doing

their legitimate business.

According to him, the need to protect life and property informed their decision to shut down the market.

Camilus appealed to the executive Governor of Lagos State, Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu and other law abiding citizens to intervene before the matter degenerates into a serious security issue beyond control.

He said: "The extreme extortion going on, especially between Volkswagen bus stop and Alaba market is becoming so unbearable as traders are made to pay for a fully cleared container or a truck a whopping sum of N70,000 to N100,000 before they can be allowed to convey their goods to the market; it is the same for those supplying goods from their warehouses.

"For traders who cannot afford or who hesitate to pay

are either beaten up or injured. Sadly enough, only yesterday (Wednesday), we woke up to the information that a new loading point was to be instituted on the already constricted Alaba road, which has already been taken over by petty traders who were given portions to display wares to the detriment of existing shop owners, also completely defacing this market of international repute.

"To ensure this issue was handled amicably, the Alaba amalgamated leaders quickly contacted the executive chairman of Ojo Local Government who promised to call them to order, we also contacted the interim caretaker committee chairman who also promised to call them to order but surprisingly on Tuesday, October 19, we were greeted with chaos in our market as hoodlums that we cannot quantify trooped into the market with guns, machete, and other dangerous weapons; shooting and maiming both buyers and traders who are doing their legitimate business to the extent that some were killed and several other wounded.

"To this end, we want to say enough is enough! The Alaba

blockade along Alaba International market road. "We also demand that all toll collection points will be at Volkswagen and Chemists Bus

stops and the reduction in outrageous fees collected from containers, trucks, and other vehicles."

Also, the chairperson and

Security Coordinator of Alaba Amalgamated Association, Oyindeji Olaleye advised that the clash should not be politicised.

POWA establishes centre for sickle cell patients in Imo

From Collins Osuji, Owerri

POLICE Officers' Wife Association (POWA), has established a centre to offer free health services for management of sickle cell patients in Imo State.

Speaking at the official commissioning of the centre, wife of the state's Police Commissioner and Imo POWA Chairperson, Hajiya Habiba Ahmed Barde said it was established to cushion the pains and trauma sickle cell patients experience and endure.

Hajiya Barde, who said the initiative was borne out of her passion to offer succour to patients, appealed to government at all levels and other concerned stakeholders to partner with efforts aimed at prioritizing the health needs of the patients across the country.

She said: Coming from the angle of a parent to a sickle cell patient, there is no need to overemphasise the pain, emotional stress and finan-

ordinator, Association of People Living with Sickle Cell, Aisha Edwards Maduagwu, said: "For some sickle cell carriers who suffer prolonged crisis episodes, quality healthcare services is the silver lining and hope for them from such agonizing moments. "The serenity and ambience of the medical facility, the confidence and warmth exuding from doctors and other caregivers, meticulous treatments and monitoring, are all factors that necessitate the recovery rate of the average sickle cell patient."

"We are hopeful that this Police Medical Center would serve to project the image of the police as a health conscious organization, providing the best healthcare delivery within Owerri municipality and beyond, more

so now that both the Federal and state governments are seeking to curb medical tourism.

"POWA Imo State under the guidance of Hajiya Habiba Barde, has succeeded in rekindling our faith in the Nigerian project of health, peace and progress. I would use this medium to tell everyone to embrace the Sickle Cell Disease (Eradication and Control) Law, and push for a replica in Imo State," she added.

Former governor of Imo State, Jude Agbaso, Minister of State for Education, Rt. Hon. Goodluck Nanah Opiah, represented by Hon. Obinna Arlaga, Coordinator, Egbeba North Development Centre, among others applauded the initiative and pledged their support.

