

One dies as police, traders clash in Onitsha

• Market shut

ONE person was killed and four others injured when a police patrol team raided the Mgbuka market in Obosi, Anambra State, in search of Indian hemp sellers yesterday.

The incident, according to eye witnesses occurred when the police fired at

From Adimike George,
Onitsha

some fleeing suspected Indian hemp sellers near the market premises.

The police team, believed to be acting on a tip-off had swooped on the suspected Indian hemp sellers. But on sighting the police, the sellers and their customers fled, prompting the police to chase them.

In the ensuing melee, the police fired into the air and a passer by was hit. He later died in the hospital.

The incident sparked off a riot as some traders confronted the police, the policeman was stripped naked while his colleagues escaped.

Following the intervention of the market leaders, the stripped policeman

was let off the hook.

But the market was shut when the police returned with the intention to make mass arrests.

In a telephone chat with *The Nation*, the chairman of the market union, Chief Eugene Azubogu, said the security situation warranted the shutting of the market.

He described some of the fleeing suspects as

mere criminals who after smoking Indian hemp, resorted to snatching peoples' monies and other valuables at the market.

The State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Fidelis Agbo (DSP) told reporters that he was yet to get in touch with the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of the area, Mr. Francis Bissong for details of the incident.