

One dies as police disperse pro-Palestine protest by Shi'ites in Kaduna

A MAN, identified simply as Aliyu, died yesterday in Kaduna in a melee between members of the Sheikh Ibrahim Zakzaky-led Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN), also called the Shi'ites, and the police.

The incident occurred when the Shi'ites staged a pro-Palestine protest in the northcentral city.

The state police command said IMN members attacked the policemen drafted to disperse the "illegal" protest over the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

It was in the melee that Aliyu was killed.

But the Shi'ites accused the police of killing two of their men during the clash.

Reacting to the incident, Kaduna State Police Command's spokesman Mansur Hassan, an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), said: "It is a lie to say that police killed two Shi'ite members. We were only out to disperse the protesters because IMN is a proscribed organisation in Kaduna State. They were protesting against Israel and

From AbdulGafar Alabelewe, Kaduna

Palestine war. But this is not Israel; this is Kaduna.

"On the contrary, it was the IMN members that started firing at our men. They fired catapult with pellets at our men. In the process, they (Shi'ites) killed one civilian identified as Aliyu. They blocked the road, attacked innocent civilians passing by."

The IMN members started the protest from the premises of the Kaduna State Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), marching through Muhammadu Buhari Way to the office of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to submit a protest letter.

Minutes after the protest started, policemen clashed with the protesters, firing teargas and shooting into the air to disperse them.

The protesters carried placards with various inscriptions.

Leader of the protesters, Aliyu Umar Tirmizi, explained the reason for the march.