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Five feared killed, others injured as [Lagos NURTW factions clash](#)

February 1, 2012 by Eniola Akinkuotu [20 Comments](#)



The five-day battle between two factions of the Lagos State chapter of the National Union of Road Transport Workers reached a climax on Tuesday as five people reportedly lost their lives while many sustained injuries.

Although police authorities claimed that only one person was killed, eyewitnesses said the death toll was higher.

It was learnt that the violence was perpetuated by loyalists of the two contenders for the chairmanship position in the union.

A reliable source said there had been a leadership tussle in the union between a former chairman, Alhaji Akanni Olohunwa and a former treasurer, Alhaji Musiliu Akinsanya, aka *MC Oluomo*.

It was gathered that the national headquarters had intervened in the crisis but an amicable settlement could not be reached as the two contenders refused to step down for each other.

Metro gathered that the violence affected various market areas on Lagos Island such as Oyebanji, Idumota, Isale-eko,

Enuowa, Idumagbo, Tom Jones, Adeniji Adele, Oshodi, Dosunmu and Campos.

An eyewitness, who identified himself simply as Akin, said the thugs wielded sophisticated guns and shot indiscriminately.

Akin said, "The thugs were shooting indiscriminately at people. What compounded the problem was that these areas where the clash occurred have markets. So, there are always crowds there.

"One man was severely injured and they chased him into my compound but they later left him. I heard from neighbours that five people were killed. The thugs wielded sophisticated guns, including AK-47 rifles."

It was gathered that economic activities in the affected areas were brought to a standstill as many banks and schools hurriedly closed.

Policemen reportedly fired tear gas canisters to disperse the hoodlums and later began searching houses for weapons.

A resident, who identified himself simply as Akintunde, blamed the state government for the clash, saying that the government had politicised the union by interfering in its affairs.

He said, "There are many unions in this country but why is it that it's only the NURTW that the government has interest in?

"NURTW officials collect fees from commercial vehicle drivers even from the ones that are not their members and

they do not use the money judiciously.

“The NURTW neither maintain nor repair the parks which buses use. Also, political parties use NURTW members during elections and even provide arms and ammunition for them. So, because they find them useful, the government turns a blind eye to their atrocities. Some elements in the state government are also supporting a faction of the union. That is why the crisis has escalated.”

The Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Jaiyeoba Joseph, told our correspondent on the telephone that only one person was killed, adding that some arrests had been made.

“Between yesterday and today (Tuesday), one person was killed and four people have been arrested so far. Meanwhile, investigations are ongoing,” he said.

Joseph said the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Yakubu Alkali, had directed the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Tunde Sobulo, to take over the security of the area.

He said the CP took the decision to ensure that peace returned to the area on time.

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