

One dies as Ladipo traders clash with soldiers

February 26, 2016



Scene of the clash

50809

Afeez Hanafi

One person has been confirmed dead as traders at the Ladipo Market, Oshodi, Lagos, on Thursday protested against alleged extortion by one *Monday Ijoba*.

It was learnt that *Ijoba* and his gang members were reportedly employed by the local government authority in the area to collect charges from the traders.

Displaying placards which read, "Monday, enough is enough", among others, the traders chanted war songs.

The market is dominated by Igbo, who sell spare parts and electronics, among others.

It was learnt that policemen and soldiers mobilised to the scene, but some of the protesters reportedly fired gunshots to chase them away.

PUNCH Metro gathered that a trader, whose identity had yet to be identified, was hit by a stray bullet and died, while others were injured.

Our correspondent learnt that *Ijoba's* boys had attacked a trader, who challenged them on the extortion last week. The trader was seriously injured and was said to have died.

The trader's death was said to have caused the Thursday's protest, which started around 9am, paralysing commercial activities in the market.

Our correspondent watched as the rioters hurled bottles and other weapons at *Ijoba's* gang members.

The fracas lasted for a few hours before the security operatives were able to restore normalcy to the area.

Gadgets of some eyewitnesses who wanted to capture the incident were also seized, and photos taken from the scene were deleted.

An eyewitness, Ikechukwu Sunday, said, "Some of the rioters fired gunshots and tried to chase the soldiers and policemen away. A protester was hit by a stray bullet in the process and died. Some also sustained injuries."

A trader, who identified himself only as Chibuzor, said, *Ijoba* had been chased out of the market, adding that he would not be allowed to lord it over them.

He said, "He (*Ijoba*) and his boys are being used by the local government authority to extort money from us daily and they have become a thorn in our flesh. At times, I pay N500 in a day. Last week, his boys attacked a trader, who was against the extortion. They hacked him and he later died in the hospital. We don't want *Ijoba* here again."

Another trader, who identified himself only as Emeka, urged the state government to intervene in the

tussle to forestall further breakdown of law and order.

He said, "As long as Monday (*Ijoba*) insists that he is in control of the market, peace will not reign because people do not want him. I just want the government to come in and settle the matter amicably. We cannot afford to lose more persons to this protest."

The Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Dolapo Badmos, confirmed the protest, adding that the market association, the local government officials and other stakeholders had been invited by the Commissioner of Police, Fatai Owoseni.

She said, "According to the information we have, the council uses *Monday Ijoba* and his boys to collect fees from traders in the market. On Wednesday, they went there again and there was a clash. A trader was hit by a stray bullet and he died this morning. We are still investigating to know who fired the shot.

"The CP was at the scene and he has invited all the parties involved to a meeting, while normalcy has been restored."

Copyright PUNCH.

All rights reserved. This material, and other digital content on this website, may not be reproduced, published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed in whole or in part without prior express written permission from PUNCH.

Contact: editor@punchng.com