

METRO PLUS

One killed as Mushin gangs clash over traders' contributions

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rent shops

Afeez Hanafi

A hitherto tense Mushin area of Lagos State exploded into a war zone on Monday as two rival gang members engaged one another in a bloody clash.

A load carrier, identified simply as Kayode, was reportedly killed by a stray bullet from the gang members, while many other residents of the area sustained injuries.

A policeman was also said to have been shot in the leg, while about 10 shops were burnt during the clash.

PUNCH Metro learnt that there had been a lingering strife between two rival gangs in the community – *Alamutu* and *Akala boys* – over the sharing of money collected from traders in the Alamutu Market, Idi Oro, Mushin.

It was gathered that Akala boys collected between N200 and N600 from each trader on a daily basis and gave a certain percentage of the total sum to *Alamutu boys*. The percentage was, however, seen as “small” by the latter, leading to the crisis, which reportedly started on Saturday.

Our correspondent learnt that security operatives were drafted to the scene on Sunday to restore peace, but the clash resurfaced shortly after they left.



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A resident... ling that people were forced to remain indoors.

He said, “The fight was very serious. They were fighting over the money paid by the traders. It was *Akala boys* that have been collecting the money. But the *Alamutu boys* wanted to take over. There had been heavy shootings since Saturday.

“Military men came yesterday (Sunday) to disperse them. They resumed the fight today (Monday) and people started running helter-skelter.”

As of 2pm on Monday, commercial activities in the community had been brought to a halt, with many shops shut. Our correspondent also observed a section of the market littered with goods destroyed during the melee.

Soldiers and some operatives of the Rapid Response Squad, Lagos State Police Command, were on the ground to restore normalcy.

An eyewitness, who spoke on condition of anonymity, explained that the hoodlums cashed in on the crisis to loot shops, burning about 10 stores in the process.

“The fight has been on for three months now and several persons have been killed. The leader of *Akala boys*, *Abija*, promised to give a part of the money to *Alamutu boys*. But he didn’t keep to the promise.

“On Saturday, task force officials came to demolish some shops, where cannabis was sold. The *Akala boys* thought it was *Alamutu boys* that instigated the raid. That also worsened the distrust between them. One of the load carriers in the market, *Kayode*, was killed on Monday and a policeman was shot in the leg,” he added.

A pharmacy store owner, who did not want his name in print for security reasons, said his shop was burnt because he declined to give the thugs N600 when they came on Monday.

“This is the third time my shop was burnt in *Idi Oro*. I have no idea of how to get back on my feet. I have a family to cater to,” he added.

Our correspondent learnt that about 30 suspects had been arrested for the mayhem.



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Market ▾sted the move, resulting in a fight.

“During the fight between the street boys, shops were burnt, while some others were looted by the fighters. The suspects were chased to the inner streets of *Idi Oro*, where machetes and axes were recovered from them.”

The Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, ASP *Olarinde Famous-Cole*, said the market had been shut to rid it of criminal elements.

He said, “The Commissioner of Police, *Fatai Owoseni*, was on the ground to assess the situation. The market has been shut, while arrest of principal offenders continues. No casualty was recorded.”

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