

# Suspected burglars, police clash in Kwara, market shut

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By Leke Baiyewu

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The Mandate market in Adewole area of Ilorin, Kwara State capital was temporarily shut down on Saturday following a crisis between the farm produce traders and the police in the market.

Mandate Market is a produce market where northern traders sell raw tomatoes, pepper, onions and other farm produce to retailers who will eventually sell the product to housewives and food vendors in the town.

*Sunday PUNCH* gathered that the crisis which started at about 11.30am saw a section of the traders engaging security agents in an argument while teargas canisters were fired to bring normalcy to the area.

Kwara State Police Command said the crisis in the market was caused by a misunderstanding between two groups of tomatoes and pepper sellers in the market while another source attributed the cause of the crisis to a minor disagreement between the traders and the police following the arrest of some Hausa traders for alleged shop breaking in the market.

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A statement by the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Okasanmi Ajayi, added, “A misunderstanding between two groups of tomatoes and peppers sellers in Mandate market led to a fracas.

“The Commissioner of Police Kwara State, Paul Odama, has dispatched a team of policemen to the scene; calm is gradually being restored. No casualty on the sides of the marketers or the police has been recorded as at now.”

However, the Public Relations Officer of the Civil Defence Corps, Ayeni Olasunkanmi, said, “The issue at the Mandate market was an aftermath of a raid carried out by the Nigeria Police in the market due to complaints from the marketers that some shop breakers used to operate inside the market in the night.

But another report indicated that scores of people were injured as law enforcement agents and suspected shop breakers clashed at the Mandate market.