

NURTW Factions Clash In Lagos, 1 Killed, Others Injured, 6 Arrested

Published on January 27, 2012 by pmnews · 2 Comments

The election of the National Union of Road Transport Workers, NURTW, in Lagos State turned bloody yesterday when a popular businessman, Alhaji Ola-Shehu Ekeniojuoti, was shot dead in Obalende by gunmen suspected to be supporters of one of the NURTW chairmanship candidates.

The gunmen also injured two members of the union during a mayhem that broke out between members of factions of the union at Iyana-Ipaja and spread to Lagos Island where Alhaji Ola-Shehu was killed.

The two injured persons have been admitted in a hospital on Lagos Island.

P.M.NEWS learnt that trouble started after the NURTW National President, Alhaji Nasiru Yasiu, during a closed-door meeting at the union's Abule Egba office, stated that the Lagos State NURTW election would hold at a date to be announced later, since the five contestants to the number one seat in the state could not present a consensus candidate.

The former chairman, Alhaji Rafiu Akanni Olohunwa's supporters were said to have been caught off guard as their expectation was that the NURTW National President would hand pick and endorse their man, at the said meeting.

Yasiu's announcement led to clashes at Iyana-Ipaja and later Obalende on Lagos Island, where Alhaji Ola-Shehu was alleged to have been shot dead by supporters of a chairmanship candidate.

The deceased was said to be the brother of a staunch supporter of NURTW strongman in Oshodi, Alhaji Musiliu Akinsanya a.k.a. MC Oluomo.

The deceased's brother, Abu Ekeniojuoti a.k.a. Abu Stainless, was the former chairman of NURTW on Lagos Island.

The late Alhaji Ola-Shehu will be buried today according to Islamic rites

Some of the chairmanship contestants include the former state chairman of NURTW, Alhaji Olohunwa; the former state treasurer, Alhaji Akinsanya; Tajudeen Agbede and Alhaji Sope.



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The contestants have been persuaded to step down for one another to make way for a consensus candidate to no avail.

Meanwhile, men of the State Anti-Robbery Squad, SARS, have arrested six suspects in connection with the mayhem.

Investigations revealed that a high-ranking member of the union was among five suspects arrested by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of operations, Tunde Sobulo, yesterday evening.

Sobulo personally found two pump action rifles in the vehicle of one of the suspects, according to our source.

The suspect who was in possession of the guns is gunning for the seat of deputy chairman in the forthcoming Lagos State NURTW election.

He was at the meeting presided over by the National President of the union yesterday at Iyana Ipaja.

He and the other suspects are currently being quizzed at the SARS office in Ikeja.

Meanwhile, Keke NAPEP operators and NURTW officials reportedly clashed this morning at Orile-Iganmu area of Lagos.

As at press time, an eyewitness said the clash had become bloody and the atmosphere was tense in the area.

Responding to yesterday's bloody clashes, the former state chairman of NURTW, Olohunwa, denied the allegation that his supporters were the masterminds.

Speaking through his second personal assistant, Mumuni, Olohunwa claimed that many of his supporters were injured by supporters of his opponents who were hauling stones and missiles at him.

Mumuni told P.M.NEWS this morning that: "After the meeting, Alhaji Olohunwa came outside the secretariat. Supporters of the other contestants were shouting 'ole, ole' (meaning thief, thief) and they were throwing stones and missiles at him at the Abule Egba Secretariat.

"In order to protect him, Olohunwa's supporters formed a human shield around him to enable him get out of the troubled area in one piece."

Olohunwa's PA said the police are in a better position to know who fired the shot that killed Ola- Shehu because they were on the ground and they prevented people from moving near the NURTW state secretariat.

--Habeeb Ogunbadejo



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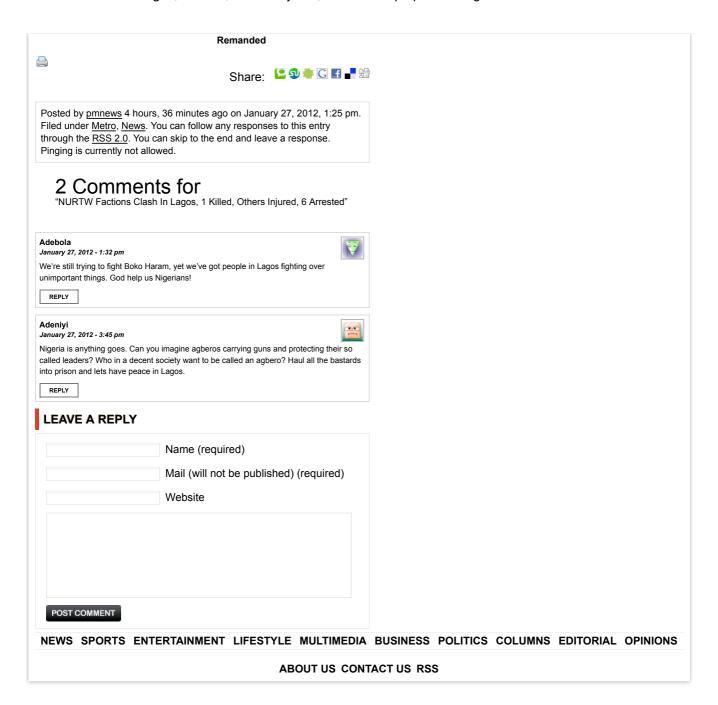
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