

Two feared dead in LASTMA, drivers' clash

By Evelyn Usman & Paul Onah

At least two persons lost their lives yesterday during a violent clash between commercial bus drivers and officials of the Lagos State Traffic Management

Authority (LASTMA) in Ijaye area of Lagos.

But the Police said no one died in the crisis that brought business activities in the ever busy area to a standstill for the better part of the day.

Report said trouble erupted after some commercial bus drivers were disallowed by LASTMA officials from driving against traffic. The drivers and other motorists were reported to have taken such decision after being held up in traffic for several hours, as a result of the on-going repairs of the road. Commuters also had to trek long distances before boarding buses to their destinations.

An eye witness account had it that when one of the drivers was held by LASTMA officials for violating traffic rules, he put up stiff resistance arguing that other motorists also drove against traffic. The heated argument later degenerated into a free-for-

all fight in which dangerous weapons such as broken bottles and jack knives were said to have been used. The crisis spread to Meiran and its environs as LASTMA officials were reportedly attacked on sight. One of them was reportedly beaten to a stupor.

Reports said several motorists fled when the situation got out of hand as hoodlums hijacked the opportunity to smash vehicles' windscreens.

The situation was later brought under control by both conventional and Mobile policemen who were drafted to the scene.

Contacted, the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Olubode Ojajuni described the drivers' action as sheer indiscipline. He assured that the situation had been brought under control and added that there was no loss of life. But he but could not ascertain if there were any arrests.

Williams' group declares Taiwo