

# ACROSS THE NATION

## One feared dead, others injured as touts renew clash in Ajegunle market

By Evelyn Usman

**L**AGOS—AT least one person was yesterday feared dead and several others severely injured in a renewed clash between factions of butchers in Alayabiagba market, Ajegunle, a Lagos suburb, commercial bus drivers and motor park touts otherwise known as *Agbero*.

The violent clash which disrupted business activities as well as vehicular and human movements in the densely populated area, lasted for the better part of the day, as the warring groups reportedly attacked themselves with dangerous weapons.

Eye witnesses said trouble erupted following protest by commercial bus drivers, on Wednesday evening, over the use of their park by road side traders in the evening. In the process, the protesters were said to have allegedly

threw the wares of the intruders away. This resulted in a fight between them and the butchers. The situation was however arrested by policemen from Ajeromi division.

But it took a fierce dimension yesterday as some of the traders whose wares were destroyed the previous day by the protesting drivers, stormed the park and attacked the unprepared drivers. Some tax collectors reported to have given the road side traders licences, were reported to have also been attacked.

A free-for-all fight ensued in which dangerous weapons such as broken bottles, cutlasses, axes, locally made guns, charms and amulets were said to have been freely used by the warring groups.

Civil servants as well as traders at the popular market were reportedly injured by the warring groups. Traders

hurriedly locked up their shops while some ran away leaving their goods at the mercy of hoodlums who had hijacked the situation. Several motorists also had their windscreens shattered in the process.

It however took the combined efforts of teams of policemen from Ajeromi division personally led by the Divisional Police Officer, Mr Joseph Ogbeide and some naval personnel to bring the tensed atmosphere under control.

Contacted, Lagos State Police Public Relations officer, Mr Olubode Ojajuni said three persons have been arrested in connection with the crisis. He confirmed that several persons were injured but that no casualty was recorded.

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