

One killed, several injured as thugs go on rampage in Lagos

By Esther Onyegbula

THERE was pandemonium in Otto Awori, Ojo Local government area of Lagos State, yesterday, as hoodlums loyal to some aspirants for tomorrow's state House of Assembly election went on rampage.

During the fracas, one person was killed while several others were seriously wounded and rushed to a nearby hospital. No fewer than 35 vehicles were destroyed in a nearby mechanic workshop by the rampaging political thugs.

The deceased was killed after crisis broke out at Otto Awori at about 1:34p.m. when a top official of Okada Riders Association (name withheld) said to be the main sponsor of Ojo constituency 11 aspirant for Lagos State House of Assembly allegedly led one of the aspirants to Oni of Ijanikin's palace for a rally.

It was gathered that his group clashed with some boys from Oto Awori resulting in a crisis that lasted for hours.

It was learned that a middle

aged man whose identity could not be ascertained was beaten to death by some of the hoodlums. Scores of people including passers-by and shop owners were seriously wounded by the dangerous weapons freely used by the hoodlums.

Some of the injured people were rushed to Ademola Hospital at Cele Bus Stop.

When *Vanguard* visited the affected area, heavily-policemen were trying to restore normalcy to the area.

One of the eyewitnesses, Adedayo Sesan, said trouble started when the campaign trains of the aspirants clashed at Oni of Ijanikin's palace.

"According to him, hoodlums went on rampage attacking themselves and other people with dangerous weapons such as cutlasses, knives and broken bottles."

Another eyewitness said trouble started when one of the aspirants came to Oto Awori for campaign.

After meeting with Ijanikin people, he went to Vespa

Market to campaign, then he headed for Otto but was blocked by youths who refused him entrance because "people from Otto are angry that their son, Bibiire, allegedly won the party's primaries ticket for that very office, but was denied contesting as the election was rigged in favour of this particular aspirant who came for campaign."

The eyewitness said: "It was really tough in the morning, they blocked the road, damaged so many things, people were scampering for safety, police people came with about two vans but could not stop the hoodlums, until the soldiers came."

"One person was killed. Most shops around that area closed on time, by the time I closed, the Army people were able to put the situation under control but even as I was leaving there around 5p.m., both police vans and army were still parked around the road."

All efforts to reach the spokesperson, Lagos State Police Command, CSP Chike Oti, were unsuccessful as he did not pick calls to his phone.