

El-Zakzaky @70: One dead, many injured as Shi'ites, Police clash in Abuja

By Luminous Jannamike

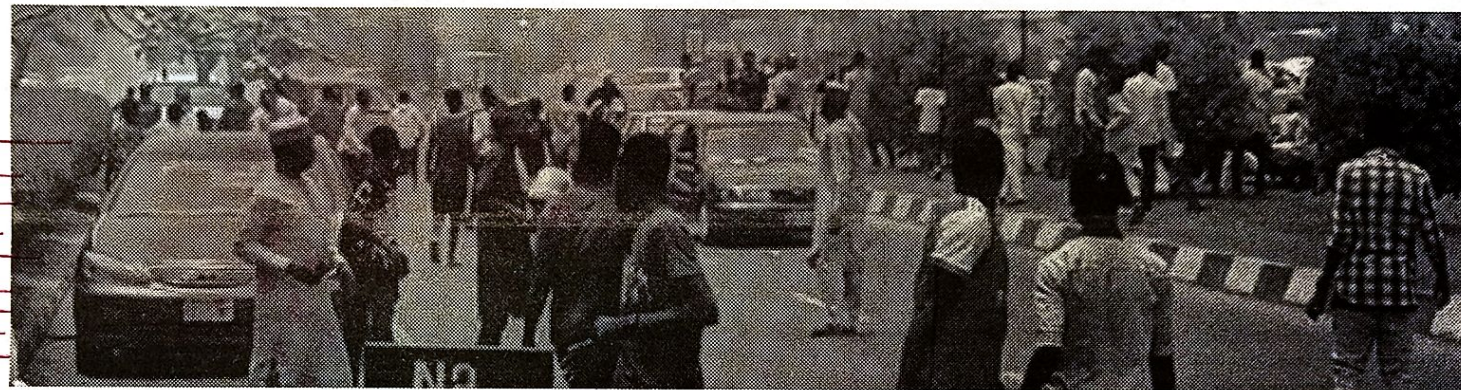
ABUJA — AN unidentified man was reportedly killed and many injured during a fiasco that ensued between members of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria, otherwise known as Shi'ites, and personnel of the Nigeria Police Force in Abuja.

Secretary of IMN's Academic Forum, Mr Abdullahi Musa, confirmed the incident to our correspondent, yesterday.

He alleged that the security operatives used tear gas canisters and live bullets on members of the sect, who were demonstrating in front of the National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, head office, Abuja, in a bid to disperse them.

According to him, the protest march to NHRC was in commemoration of the 70th birthday of their detained leader, Sheikh Ibraheem El-Zakzaky, and to demand his unconditional release from government custody.

He said: "One person was killed and many were



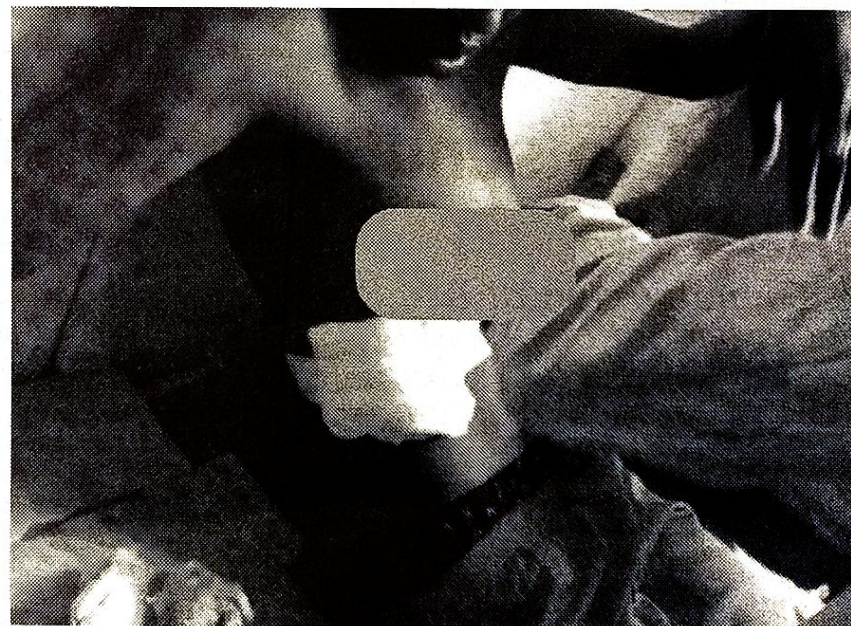
Scene of the clash.

injured because we were canvassing the unconditional release of our leader, who marks his 70th birthday today (Monday). And what happened has also confirmed that Sheikh El-Zakzaky is the most oppressed religious leader in the country because they (security personnel) have been attacking us unprovoked.

"It is very unfortunate but we are a law-abiding group and we have refused to take up arms to drive home our demand for Sheikh El-Zakzaky's release. It was the security agencies that first attacked us upon our arrival at the NHRC headquarters along Aguiyi Ironsi Way.

"However, we have appealed to our members and supporters to remain calm even in the face of this provocation and asked them not to take laws into their own hands."

When contacted, the Public Relations Officer for the FCT Police Command, ASP Maryam Yusuf, demanded an SMS, which was sent to her phone number but she did not respond to it at press time.



One of those shot during the clash.