

One dies as fuel hawkers, Show Boys clash in Lagos

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A violent confrontation occurred yesterday, between diesel hawkers and a group known as 'Show Boys' at Mile 2, on the Oshodi-Apapa expressway, Lagos, with one person feared dead and several others injured.

There were different accounts on how the fight broke out. A version of the account said the clash allegedly stemmed from a dispute over the sale of adulterated petrol.

Another version said it was caused by argument over unnecessary hike in price of petroleum products by diesel hawkers.

According to eyewitnesses, a customer who purchased diesel from a roadside hawker returned, accusing the hawker of selling oil instead of diesel. The argument escalated to fight, during which dangerous objects were used.

One of them, who gave his identity simply as Sheu, said: "They (hawkers) sold petrol for N3,500 and N4,500 for five litres of petrol to people who are hustlers too. They were told on Monday to bring down the price, since they were not paying for the space but they did not listen. It was the argument over the price that caused the fight."

Another eye witness, who gave his name simply as Shamsudeen, said: "The fight was between people selling diesel by the road side and Show Boys. Some of the hawkers had their product destroyed in the process. It was a bloody fight, but I can't say how many of them died."

Three commercial bus drivers told our correspondent that one person was killed.

He said: "We could not operate at Mile 2 for close to one hour because the warring factions were at the opposite sides of the road hauling stones and broken bottles at themselves. We did not want to be caught in the crossfire."

While a source claimed that two to three fatalities were recorded, others claimed more than three lives were lost. However, the exact number of casualties was unconfirmed at press time.

The brawl was eventually brought under control by a team of policemen from Area 'H' Command Festac, who restored normalcy to the area.

Attempts to arrest two members of one of the factions were reportedly met with resistance, as they claimed they were not involved in the fight.

The incident caused a temporary disruption in commercial activities, with bus drivers avoiding the area.