

FACTOR

TRAVELLERS' FEUD SPARKS HORSE 'RIOT'

By EAMON DILLON

TRAVELLER gangsters are attacking soft targets in a bitter feud which erupted at Dublin's Smithfield Market a week ago.

It is not the first time that innocent travellers, distantly related to members of crime gangs, have been singled out in potentially lethal attacks.

Last week's shocking violence comes after a petrol bomb attack on a Galway house last January, which a toddler was lucky to survive.

"There's going to be revenge for this. They've attacked our children so we are going to target theirs," one traveller warned the *Sunday World* after the arson attack.

The threat was taken seriously by Gardai who investigated the claims and brought together leading figures from the feuding factions in a bid to hammer out a truce.

Travelling families all over Ireland have been forced out of their homes to avoid being targeted for violence.

Within hours of the chaotic gun and slash hook attack, the travelling community was buzzing with the names of those who carried out the assaults which have led for calls to shutdown the historic market.

Toddler

A notoriously violent criminal, Paddy 'Rubber Og' O'Reilly is being blamed for orchestrating the revenge attack on members of the wider Molnerney clan.

His cousin's two-year-old daughter escaped from the burning house when her aunt jumped from a bedroom window with the toddler in her arms.

Rubber Og was previously jailed for his part in a pitched battle with another group of travellers during which he pointed a gun at a gardai officer who tried to stop the fighting.

In September 2009, four car loads of men arrived in an early morning raid at a Cork site, where Rubber Og O'Reilly and other family members were staying in Mahon.

Rubber Og emerged from a caravan with a double barrel shotgun that he pointed at the travellers and gardai alike, telling them "f---k off".

He was then spotted passing the weapon to his wife and one of the



BLAME: Paddy 'Rubber Og' gardai managed to grab it.

Rubber Og chased the officer, pulling the gun from his grip and telling him to stay back or be killed.

He was later jailed for five years in May 2003 for possessing the gun.

In January this year, his first cousin Ann Quilligan suffered a broken back and ankle after she jumped from her burning house in Galway carrying her two-year niece.

Last Sunday, three travellers, including young boxer Wesley McDonagh, were injured in the sudden slash hook and gun attack.

His father Charlie said his son was innocent and had nothing to do with the trouble behind the incident.

In a statement Pavee Point expressed "its shock at and condemnation of the events of violence which occurred at Smithfield Horse Fair in Dublin."

They urged anyone with any information to pass it onto the Gardai.

GRUESOME: A gardai tries to help one of the wounded
Pics: Claran McGowan

BEFORE THE RIOT: Geraldine on a horse held by Philip Fiegles

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