

Curfew in Kaduna, govt urges calm

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Emir of Gusau, Alhaji Ibrahim Bello (middle), District heads of Gusau emirate, representatives of Security Agencies, APC youth leaders in Zamfara State and repentant members of east and west rival groups in Gusau and its environs after a reconciliation meeting among the groups at the Emir's Palace in Gusau yesterday Photo: NAN

Govt urges calm as state security council meets today

A 24-hour curfew was imposed on Kaduna metropolis and environs yesterday following commotion in many parts of the state with many people feared killed and others wounded.

Daily Trust reports that suspicion over the fate of the paramount ruler of Adara, the Agom Adara, Mr. Maiwada Galadima, led to stampede, starting from Kasuwan Magani, where 55 people were killed three days ago.

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Reports had filtered in that the Agom Adara, who was abducted with his wife Mrs. Victoria Galadima at Maikyali village along Kaduna-Kachia road, has been killed following the release of his wife yesterday.

The police had on Friday confirmed that the shooting to death of the police orderly of the traditional ruler and three others as well as the abduction of the royal father and his wife Mrs Victoria.

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One of the leaders of the Adara youths said the abductors had called the daughter of the traditional ruler with his phone and asked her to come and take her mother at a spot near Rin village.

He said the lady then contacted leaders of the Adara who sent a car and picked Mrs. Galadima at the spot and brought her back to town.

“It was when the wife came back and people saw her alive but did not see the Agom Adara that tempers flared, suspecting that the traditional ruler had been killed. Some youths rushed into the streets and started blocking roads and searching vehicles.

“But the abductors later got in touch with the daughter and she spoke with her father and confirmed that he is still alive,” the source, who does not want to be named, told Daily Trust.

However, before the Agom could confirm he was still alive, the news had gone far that he had been killed.

Tension spread to communities along the road with motorists plying the route being targeted, and people started running in all directions creating stampede at Mararaban Rido, Sabon Tasha and other parts of the Kaduna metropolis.

There are reports that some traders were attacked at the Sabo market. Traders from other markets such as Kasuwar Barci, Abubakar Gumi Central Market, Kasuwar Unguwar Shanu, among others, attend the market every Sunday.

“People started running in all directions and nobody was sure what was happening,” said a trader at the market.

Many feared killed

A source at St. Gerard’s Hospital in Kakuri, Kaduna, who declined being named because of the sensitivity of the issue, said many victims were taken to the hospital, mostly from Sabo axis.

“Between 4 and 6pm yesterday, three military trucks and two Volkswagen Golf cars, and two tricycles brought corpses and injured persons,” the medical personnel said.

At around 6:30pm, the source added, the hospital staff were overwhelmed by the situation.

“The school management had to order all student nurses to be deployed to the Accident & Emergency unit of the hospital to cater for the victims,” the source added.

The source, who couldn't give the exact number of corpses and injured ones brought to the hospital, said majority of the casualties had gunshot wounds, while others had machete cuts.

“By 7:30pm, the hospital management asked that the gates be closed. I saw many vehicles with victims being turned away at the gates. The bodies were deposited at the morgue while the injured ones are being treated,” the source said. Daily Trust reports that a journalist working with Nagarta Radio, Joy Odoh, was stabbed around Kawo on her way to work. She was taken to a hospital inside 1 Div Barrack where she is receiving treatment.

Irate youth took over streets

Our correspondents report that as tension enveloped the metropolis, irate youths took over major streets in Narayi, Barnawa, Tudun Wada and parts of the city centre, some brandishing weapons and freely burning tyres and searching vehicles plying the roads.

Several vehicles were burnt around Jos road in the city centre.

A Daily Trust reporter observed in Kaduna metropolis around 5pm yesterday how policemen were seen escorting more than 100 people stranded between Leventis Roundabout and Katsina Road, all along Ahmadu Bello Way, Kaduna.

The people were apparently caught up in the melee at the busy Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi Market in Kaduna. They were trekking towards Junction Road, which is the major gateway to the southern parts of the metropolis.

Security agents were also seen sending away people, mostly youths, who have converged on various streets between the Katsina Road roundabout and Ahmadu Bello Stadium roundabout.

In Tudun Wada and Sabon Gari areas of the metropolis, our reporter also observed that people were seen massing on the roads of the major streets that link with the Nnamdi Azikiwe Express Way.

In Dutsinma Street, for instance, some irate youths were seen attacking vehicles of passers-by with stones. The irate youths smashed the windscreen and side glasses of a sedan car belonging to a business man, Alhaji Garba, on Dutsinma Street, while rushing to reach his residence in Bakin Ruwa.

By 9pm last night, calm had returned to Tudun Wada, Sabon Gari, Kabala West junction areas, with only sirens of security vehicles on patrol being heard.

Why we imposed curfew

The state government said the 24 hour curfew imposed on the metropolis was meant to stop the tension from degenerating into full blown violence.

Announcing the curfew, Samuel Aruwan, a Senior Special Assistant to the Governor (Media and Publicity), said: “The Kaduna State Government today received and assessed reports of panic in Kujama, followed by Sabon Tasha and a few other places around Kaduna. Reports of the panic triggered a considerable

sense of anxiety as rumours compounded a fraught situation following the violent clashes that occurred in Kasuwan Magani on Thursday.

“The Kaduna State Government has acted to prevent this sense of panic from spreading or triggering any threat to law and order. Therefore, the state government has declared a curfew in Kaduna metropolis and its environs to manage the situation.

“Governor Nasir El-Rufai announced the curfew in a live statement broadcast on the Kaduna State Media Corporation (KSMC). In the statement, the governor appealed to all residents to do their best to uphold peace.

“The governor said that security agencies are taking necessary action to reassure our communities, restore calm and uphold law and order.

“The Kaduna State Security Council will meet to review the situation on Monday, 22 October 2018. Further updates will be issued accordingly.

The Kaduna State Government calls on all residents of the state to uphold harmony in their communities, respect the law and cooperate with security agencies to keep the peace.”

IGP deploys AIG to Kaduna

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ibrahim Idris has deployed Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) Zone 7, Taiwo Lakanu, to lead Police Special Intervention Force in Kaduna State.

Lakanu is to restore lasting peace to Kasuwar Magani area in Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State, a statement by police spokesman DCP Jimoh

Moshood said yesterday.

The police statement also condemned the attack and killing of innocent people, while calling for calm as the Police Special Investigation Team has made significant progress in the investigation into the incident.

It expressed concern over the attack and killings of 55 people, and the disturbance of peace in Kasuwar Magani on the 18th of October, 2018.

Moshood said the AIG is leading the Police Special Intervention Force comprising Four (4) Units of Police Mobile Force (PMF) specially trained Anti-Riot Policemen, Counter Terrorism Unit, Conventional Policemen and Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS).

Other units in the force include; Intelligence Response Team (IRT), Technical Intelligence Unit (TIU), State Intelligence Bureau (SIB), detachment of EOD and Police K9 (Sniffer Dogs Section) are already on ground at Kasuwar Magani.

He said, "Twenty-two suspects directly involved have been arrested and now in Police custody and some of the prominent personalities kidnapped during the incident have been rescued by the Police."

He said, "The operations will cover the entire Kasuwar Magani and environs, and other flash/trouble spots in Kaduna State."

Moshood said the police will carry out twenty four hours surveillance and patrol, stop and search and continuous raids of identified criminal hideouts and black spots.

He said, “Traditional rulers, religious leaders, public office holders, politicians, opinion leaders, parents and guardians are hereby called upon to prevail on their subjects, supporters, children and wards to support the personnel of the Police Special Intervention Force in the discharge of their responsibilities.”