

Five feared killed as LASTMA, hoodlums clash

By Oditia Sunday, Farotimi Oluwole and Hope Ekoh

The Lagos State Police Spokesman, Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), said 12 kingpins of the hoodlums have been arrested, adding that the police were hunting for the remaining leaders of the touts.

Ojajuni said: "There was unruly behaviour on the part of the commercial bus drivers and touts at Ojota this morning, they were parking on the highway. They refused to load their passengers at the service lane, where LASTMA officials

directed them. Initially they complied, later they went and regrouped and started loading passengers on the highway, that was what led to that fracas."

He added: "Twelve people have been arrested and we have seized six vehicles belonging to some of the drivers. For now, we are on the trail of others. We are looking for those NURTW officials and those touts who actually started the fight and instigated the boys. Their behaviour was too bad, you cannot breach the law of the land, they have to obey the law of the land, they have to obey the state government officials.

As from now on, we shall continue to deal with them accordingly."

The Commissioner of Police, Mr. Emmanuel Adebayo, has banned all touts from operating at the Ojota Bus Stop for now.

According to Ojajuni, "the Commissioner of Police has given a very clear directive that as from now on, there should be no NURTW there, no any form of touting there, people should move freely and go about their businesses freely there".

The early morning mayhem caused a major traffic situation from Ojota to Yaba area. Vehicles going towards Ojota were forced to turn back. There was pandemonium on Ikorodu Road as many persons ran for cover.

A Police Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) was dispatched to the scene of the incident to forestall further breakdown of law and order. APC is a light armoured vehicle used mostly by paramilitary organisation, especially the police and United Nations (UN) peacekeepers to quell riots.

Ojajuni, however, said no one was killed and no LASTMA official was injured.

Meanwhile, the state government has said it would no longer tolerate acts of indiscipline and lawlessness from street urchins and hoodlums.

The Commissioner for Transport, Muiz Banire, said the state government was determined to wipe out the menace posed by the hoodlums by asserting all legitimate powers conferred on it within the dictates of the constitution.

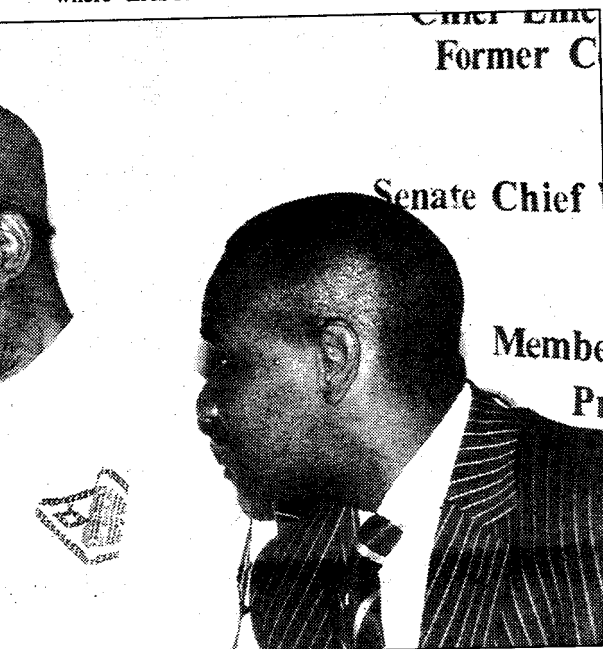
Banire spoke in Ikeja on the heels of the disruption of the flow of traffic by hoodlums along Ikorodu Road yesterday morning.

"Some arrests had already been made and those found guilty would be prosecuted," he said.

He said LASTMA officials who tried to stop the hoodlums from extorting money from motorists and disturbing the flow of traffic were attacked with weapons, including guns, machetes and cudgels.

According to Banire, during the clash, eight towing vehicles and patrol vans belonging to LASTMA were destroyed, while six officers were injured.

The commissioner stressed that by the time men of the Nigeria Police were able to bring the situation under control, 24 vehicles had been vandalised in different parts of the state, including the LASTMA zonal offices in Iponri, Ojota and Oshodi.



Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, and
Sary Lecture in Lagos... yesterday

PHOTO: GABRIEL IKHAHON

nact law on birth registration

community-based birth registration centres in 111 focal local councils across the 36 states

According to Makama, the essence of the gathering was to rub minds and ensure that every child in Nigeria is registered towards building a culture of generating data for socio-economic development.

Calling on the media to assist in changing the attitude of the citizens, he said public awareness would reinforce the campaign on birth registration.

The non-governmental organisation, National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), was also enjoined to educate women at the grassroots level on the need for birth registration.

UNICEF representative, Mrs. Sharon Oladeji, disclosed that in the report of

the National Bureau of Bio-statistics, only two per cent effective mobilisation was achieved this year.

The number of Nigerian children denied birth registration is said to range in millions, owing to lack of awareness about the process.

She said: "These children are being denied the right to a name and nationality, a situation that may also lead to barriers against accessing other rights including health care and education."

Birth registration is described as the official documentation of the birth of a child by a state administrative process. It is the permanent and official record of a child's existence fundamental to the realisation of children's rights and practical needs.

explains focus of prison reforms