



National

Six youths killed in Kaduna as traders clash with police over lockdown

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No fewer than six youths were feared dead yesterday in Kaduna State after a clash between the police and traders.

Traders at the Sabon Garri-Trikania market had trooped out for business activities when they could no longer bear the brunt of the stay-at-home order by government.

But to enforce the coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown order, armed policemen were said to have opened fire to disperse them. Before the pandemonium died down, six of the youths had kissed the dust.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mohammad Jalige, said the state command got report of the fracas, but was expecting the report of the DPO in the area.

A witness told journalists that the bloody clash that started around 3 p.m. saw the traders at the Sabon Garri-Trikania market, in Chukun Council, defying the lockdown order by the government to attend to desperate buyers of foodstuff.

The witness, who gave his name as Nasir Marina, said, “The civilian joint task force came to the market to disperse the traders, but they did not comply. When the traders did not obey their directives, they went and brought armed policemen to enforce the lockdown.

“There was confusion because several of the youths in the area came out and the police started shooting. As a result, six of the youths were killed.”

Jalige told The Guardian: “At this point, I cannot comment on the issue until we receive full details of the incident from the DPO in that area.”

Meanwhile, in an earlier statement, the governor’s media aide, Muiwa Adekeye, had said the government might be forced to maintain the 24-hour curfew without giving window for restocking.

Adekeye lamented the poor compliance level to the lockdown in the state.

He said: “Government had reviewed the 24-hour lockdown last Wednesday, by giving a two-day window of Tuesday and Wednesday every week, to enable residents buy food and other essential commodities.

“The State Task Force on Covid-19 met with representatives of traders and resolved that dealers of foodstuff and essential commodities are permitted to bring in and offload their goods on Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.”

According to the statement, palliatives are being distributed from clusters to households and in some councils.

“However, to ensure more transparency and accountability, the Palliatives Committee will work with credible Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to monitor the distribution,”



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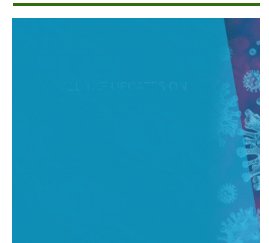
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