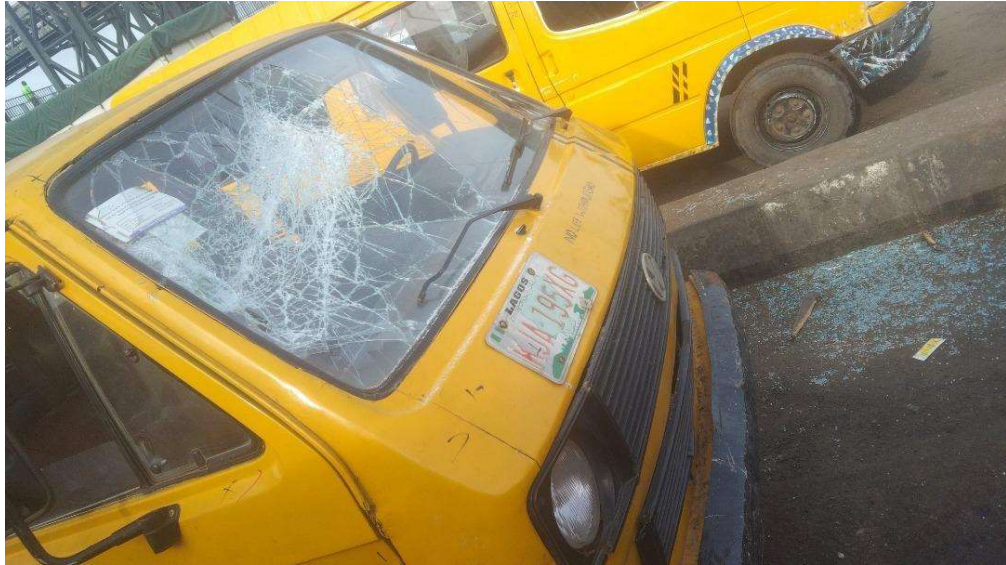


Pandemonium as hoodlums clash with soldiers in Lagos

By Odita Sunday

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Scores were injured while many others were robbed at Oshodi area of Lagos when soldiers attached to the Nigeria Air Force clashed with motor park ‘officials’ popularly called hoodlums.



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Many persons believed to be urchins were whisked away by the soldiers at Capa Motor Park, Mosafejo area of Oshodi. Trouble started when the soldiers heard about the death of one of their colleagues who was allegedly murdered on Monday by hoodlums on Oshodi bridge.

A source said the personnel of the Nigerian Air Force was allegedly murdered by hoodlums on Monday, his body was seen on top of the bridge on Tuesday and some government officials who were alerted evacuated the body to the mortuary.

Military personnel stormed the popular Capa Motor Park in the early hours of yesterday to question the chairman on what he knew about the death of the soldier, but the

The hoodlums were said to have torched the patrol vehicles belonging to the soldiers. It was gathered that there was pandemonium as residents, traders and road users ran for safety.

Motorists and their passengers also abandoned their vehicles, while many commuters were stranded as no commercial vehicle driver was willing to pass through the road for fear of being attacked by military men.

It was further gathered that the soldiers succeeded in taking unspecified number of suspected hoodlums away while some dangerous weapons were recovered at the scene.

A witness, Felicia Madu, said: "The Air Force personnel was on mufti when he ran into a group of hoodlums who were robbing people of their belongings on top of Oshodi bridge. He resisted the hoodlums and was overpowered and killed by the robbers. After killing him, they dumped his body into a ditch.



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"We knew there would be trouble when a team of soldiers from OP MESSA stormed Oshodi today to interrogate the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) chairman. His boys and other hoodlums started throwing stones at the soldiers. That was the cause of today's crisis.

"In the process of the crisis, hoodlums cashed in on the opportunity and started vandalising and looting properties from stranded passengers and commercial vehicles drivers within the vicinity."

As of the time of filing this report, relative calm had returned to the scene as a combined team of military, police and para-military personnel were on the ground to maintain law and order.

Spokesman of the Nigerian Army, 9 Brigade, Major A.K. Bello, said the Army was not directly involved in the incident.

"Based on the situation on ground, we had to wade into the crisis and bring the situation under control because of the sensitivity of the environment," he said.

Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, said the

He said. The Lagos State Police Command was aware of the conflict that occurred at (Capa Park/Mosafejo Osodi) at around 7.am.

“Normalcy has been restored to the area, as the matter is under investigation. We urge Lagosians to go about their lawful businesses in the area and the state in general. No cause for alarm. The CP has ordered that intensive patrol be emplaced in the area.”



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