



Violence in Oyo schools shakes community

Posted By: Bode Durojaiye on: November 03, 2016 In: Education 1 Comment



Oyo East Local Government, which fell victim of an orgy of violence unleashed on three schools by aggrieved pupils over their failure in promotional exams, is setting some precedence by organising a stakeholders' meeting. The aim is to ensure that public schools in its domain are more secured, to avert such uprising in future. Bode Durojaiye reports.

Following the violence last week caused by pupils of some public schools in Oyo-East Local Government of Oyo State, the host community has convened a stakeholders' meeting to forestall such ugly occurrence in future.

The mayhem, which left one person dead and several others injured, jolted the principals, teachers as well as the Alaafin of Oyo, Oba Lamidi Olayiwola Adeyemi, who, with his entourage, paid unscheduled visit to appraise the scenes of destruction.

The Caretaker Chairman of Oyo-East Local Government, Mr. Azeez Ojetunde Tirimisiyu, had, equally, summoned an emergency meeting of traditional rulers. This was followed by another gathering which comprises the All Confederation of Principals of Secondary Schools [ANCOPPS], chairmen of Parents Teachers Association, local inspector of education in the area, as well as representatives of the Divisional Police Officer, among others.

In the wake of the unrest, Oyo State Commissioner for Education Adeniyi Olowofela announced an indefinite closure of the affected schools, in addition to two other schools across three local government areas.



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In another development, the police said they had arrested 22 suspects in connection with the mayhem.

Oyo Area Commander Oyeniran Oyeniyi, an Assistant Commissioner of Police, confirmed this to our reporter on phone.

Oyeniyi said since the incident, police had begun a 24-hour intensive surveillance of public and private schools in the area to thwart a reoccurrence.

"We have met with all stakeholders, including PTAs, and urged them to warn their wards to refrain from roaming about and loitering during school hours as this will no longer be tolerated. Enough is enough. Untrained and intractable children constitute societal nuisance."

It was the first time the schools will have a taste of violence on such a scale. Isale-Oyo Community High School, Oroki; Anglican Secondary School, Apará; and Oba Adeyemi High School, Agbogangan; all in Atiba and Oyo East Local Governments were shattered by the violence perpetrated by pupils on Monday, last week.

The hooded protesters, *The Nation* learnt, had mobilised themselves, stormed the schools in groups, wielding dangerous weapons and charms destroying school properties. In a flash, the once beautiful structures that adorned the schools, became mere shadows.

It took men of the state fire service hours to put out some of the building torched by the rampaging youths.

Sources told *The Nation* that the deceased who was said to have worn a mufti to the school premises during the crisis, was sent by his parents to pick his sibling who was trapped in the crossfire.

Narrating the ordeal to Oba Adeyemi, the school's principal, Mrs Oyewo Olufade, who was close to tears, likened the incident to a 'guerilla warfare'.

She said: "The students covered their faces with masks and were armed with dangerous weapons. They stormed the school in groups, and immediately the teachers saw them, they ran into my office. But the students continued to hurl stones continuously at my office.

"So, when the teachers sensed dangers they ran out of my office and scampered into the bush for safety through the swampy path behind the school. In the process, a female teacher, now on danger list at the hospital, had one of her cheeks battered."

She added that the school's night guard also sustained injury and has been hospitalised.

In his address, Tirimisiyu noted that there is hardly any child without certain negative tendencies regardless of how sound the child's background is.

"It is either the child steals, is rude, not well mannered, or runs away from class," Tirimisiyu said.

"If the child is a female, she might be sexually indulgent, which may create concerns for her parents. It is also possible that the child is a drug addict. In whatever way it is viewed, such a child is certainly a problem to the family and the society at large."

Tirimisiyu, who felt sad about the situation, accused many youths who, according to him, are suffering from what he called social, moral, and economic indiscipline.

Speaking with reporters after assessing the schools, Oba Adeyemi described the incident as "disheartening, worrisome and disturbing."

He challenged the society to war against rising crime, general indiscipline among youths, and particularly secondary school pupils in recent times.

The monarch said: "It is also sad to note that students' indiscipline has had a lot of negative effects on the school system and learning, as academic calendar is often disrupted by their excesses.

"Students now form themselves into gangs, threatening lives of fellow students and teachers. It is as a result of this indiscipline that we now have secret cults even in our primary and secondary schools. For the country to achieve fame and progress, it is necessary for stakeholders to pay attention to frequent indiscipline among our students. This is because the fate of any nation depends on the youth she breeds as leaders of tomorrow."

Oba Adeyemi said he instructed the police not to use live bullets on the young protesters in the face of provocation, adding that were the policemen not tactical, tolerant and responsible enough, the situation could have spiralled out of control.

Under the new policy of the Oyo State government, pupils would no longer be promoted to another class on trial, unless they meet the cut-off marks in joint promotion examinations.

Following the last promotional examinations in the state, government mandated swapping of answer scripts among schools before markings, to prevent favouritism and other forms of malpractices by schools.

After marking, results were collated and sent to owner schools for onward distribution to pupils.

Some of the pupils, realising that they failed woefully, were enraged and immediately mobilised themselves for mayhem, *The Nation* gathered.

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