

Akeredolu suspends NURTW activities as factions clash

Union cries out over alleged persecution of members by Oyo, Ondo govts

ONDU State Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu has ordered indefinite suspension of the activities of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW).

The governor said he will no longer allow transport unions or any other body to sell tickets to commercial drivers.

He said it was greed pushing factions of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) to clash over sale of tickets.

The comments of Governor Akeredolu followed continued clash between factions of the NURTW, which has led to the killing of one person. Several persons were injured, while vehicles were vandalised.

Akeredolu last Monday suspended NURTW and Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) from motor parks for two weeks over fears of possible clash.

On Sunday, eight persons were injured in a clash at Owode when thugs reportedly loyal to Ondo Chairman of the NURTW, Mr. Jacob Adebo Idajo, attacked some NURTW members opposed to Idajo leadership.

The clash continued yesterday at Ola garage in Akure despite a peace meeting convened at the weekend in Osun State and attended by factions.

One person was shot dead and several others injured. Vehicles were vandalised.

The victim was identified as Ademola Ademoyegun Shina,

THE National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) has cried out over alleged persecution of members by the Oyo and Ondo state governments.

The union in a statement by the National Deputy General Secretary 2, Anthony Azogua and the state Chairman, Alhaji Abideen Olajide (Ejiogbe), warned Oyo State Governor Seyi Makinde to rescind his plan on the purported move to arrest its members in the state.

The statement advised Makinde to go after those causing trouble, instead of persecuting members.

It said: "We are aware that the governor has ordered arrest of some of our members."

"Some members of the union, namely Alhaji Abideen Olajide (Ejiogbe), Lekan Alesinloye, Kasali Lawal and Isiaka Ajeturubi, recently won a suit against the government. Instead of the government to obey the law, we learnt that plans have been perfected to arrest our members. The plan is needless and the least expected of a governor that swore to protect the lives and

property of citizens."

In Ondo State, the union alleged that Governor Rotimi Akeredolu intentional planned to proscribe the union after controlling it for almost four years.

A statement said Jacob Adebo (aka Idajo), who was imposed by Akeredolu, has been there for almost four years.

It alleged that Gbenga Ijalade from Owo, who is planning to take over from Adebo, is also the 'son' of Governor Akeredolu.

"The governor is in the best position to settle the misunderstanding between Ijalade and Adebo since the leadership of the union has been prevented by the government from intervening."

"Instead of using tricks to cause mayhem so as to proscribe the union, the government should allow the leadership of the union to intervene because we know how we settle our differences."

"This is the governor that we have hired as our lawyer before his emergence as a governor. We are surprised that our former lawyer is now the same person persecuting us."

From Osagie Otabor, Akure

while Adeyemi Samuel Ojuyobo and Akinyemi Bayo were injured.

Both factions were reportedly summoned by the National Chairman of the NURTW, Alhaji Tajudeen Baruwa and the Zonal Chairman, Olamilekan Salami to Osogbo on Monday for a peace meeting, which ended in a deadlock.

Sources said Idajo was advised to bring peace to the Ondo chapter of the union to allow the union resume operation at the garage the following day.

A leader of the other faction

against Idajo leadership, Mr. Toyin Olaoye Fayagbe, said: "Some of us were still at home this morning when our members called that they were being beaten at the park once they were identified as one of the delegates to the Osogbo meeting. It was in the process that a group of about 30 armed thugs approached the park and opened fire on them, killing one and leaving two injured."

Speaking through his Special Adviser on Special Duties and Strategy, Dr.

Doyin Odebowale, Governor Akeredolu said the government would continue selling tickets to commercial drivers.

Said he: "No union ticket will be sold in Ondo. You do not come and sell ticket from sundry sources. You collect money directly and still be beating and injuring people."

"We never wanted to send many people off the road so as not to create a social problem. We have a state to run. The tickets were given to the two factions and monitored by our office. If they were not greedy, that should be okay for them. The idea of one individual sitting in one corner and collecting money meant for the state is over. No more selling of union tickets in Ondo."

Ondo Assembly...