

# ① One killed, many injured as Yoruba nation agitators clash with police in Lagos

Two officers shot, DPO narrowly escaped death — Police OPC not involved in fracas — Gani Adams

Olaekan Olabulo and  
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**O**NE person was on Monday killed while many others were injured after Yoruba nation agitators clashed with policemen at the Ojota area of Lagos State.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in Lagos State, Benjamin Hundeyin, confirmed the death of one person, just as he claimed that some policemen, including the divisional police officer (DPO) of Alausa police station, CSP Elizabeth Opadola, narrowly escaped death.

This is just as the Aare Ona-kakanfo of Yorubaland, Iba Gani Adams, has, however, denied that members of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) were involved in the crisis.

Hundeyin, who described the agitators as miscreants, claimed that they were armed with pump-action rifles, adding that two policemen sustained gunshot wounds, while the DPO of Alausa, CSP Opadola, escaped by a whisker.

He added that a police patrol vehicle was burnt by the protesters who also destroyed another and some campaign vehicles of the All

Progressives Congress (APC).

The situation became very tense as the agitators threatened to burn down the Ketu police station before they were dispersed by a reinforcement of anti-riot policemen.

**Nigerian Tribune** gathered that trouble started when the agitators stormed the Gani Fawehinmi Park to hold a rally for the actualisation of the Yoruba nation.

An eyewitness who identified himself as Samson told the **Nigerian Tribune** that "The agitators were at one side of the Gani Fawehinmi Park, while policemen from the Rapid Rescue Squad (RRS) were on the other side."

"When more people began joining the protest, the police approached them to ask for their permit, but the agitators insisted that they did not need any before they could hold their rally."

"More policemen then arrived and they began to shoot to disperse the protesters who had by then become violent."

"At that time, some members of the APC were moving in a convoy and the agitators vandalised their vehicles and also set a police patrol vehicle ablaze."

"The clash caused serious panic and gridlock as motor-

ists abandoned their vehicles and scamped into different directions."

Hundeyin, in series of tweets on his verified Twitter handle, said: "In the early hours of today [Monday], some miscreants masquerading as Yoruba nation agitators came out in their hundreds, disrupting social and commercial activities at Ojota area of the state."

"A team of policemen, comprising Alausa Division and the Rapid Response Squad (RRS), promptly stepped in to disperse the unlawful gathering and prevent a breakdown of law and order."

"The miscreants attacked the police and destroyed two vehicles in the process."

"One person has been confirmed dead, while two police officers shot by the miscreants are currently receiving treatment. Four suspects have been arrested and investigations have commenced."

"Meanwhile, normalcy has been restored in the area. Lagosians are urged to go about their lawful businesses as measures have been put in place to prevent further breakdown of law and order."

Hundeyin added that: "It is imperative to state unequivocally that the Lagos State police command will not allow

any person or group of persons under whatever guise to disrupt the peace being enjoyed in the state."

Meanwhile, the state Commissioner of Police, Abiodun Alabi, has promised to "decisively deal with any person or group of persons found disturbing the peace of the state."

This was contained in a statement by the state police spokesperson and made available to the **Nigerian Tribune** on Monday.

The statement reads: "The Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Abiodun Alabi, hereby warns that any person or group of persons found disturbing the peace of the state under whatever guise will be decisively dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the law."

"This warning has become imperative following the unprovoked and wanton armed attack on police officers who dutifully dispersed an unlawful gathering in the early hours of today [Monday] at Ojota area of the state."

"While the command is not averse to peoples' right to freedom of assembly and association and expression, the command will equally live up to its mandate of ensuring that no person or group of persons is allowed to infringe on the fundamental human

rights of others, especially the right to freedom of movement and right to dignity of human persons."

"CP Alabi, therefore, calls on parents, guardians, opinion/religious/ community/political/traditional leaders to warn their children/wards/constituents/followers to desist from all forms of unlawful actions as the command will not tolerate the slightest form of attack on its personnel or the good people and residents of Lagos State."

Chief Gani Adams, in his reaction to information doing the rounds that members of the OPC were part of the groups that organised the Yoruba nation rally, said it was not true.

The Yoruba generalissimo who spoke in a statement by his Special Assistant on Media, Mr Kehinde Aderemi, said the Ojota rally came as a surprise, adding that it caught everybody unawares and that none of his members was part of the crisis.

Adams said: "Let me clear the air on the crisis that engulfed Ojota this morning [Monday]. There were unconfirmed reports linking members of the OPC to the mayhem. I want to state clearly that none of our members was at the scene of the incident."

"OPC is not against the liberation of Yoruba race. However, it is a fact that the struggle for the liberation of Yoruba race is an inalienable right of all Yoruba to champion self-determination, but we were not part of the rally held at Ojota."

Adams, however, reiterated OPC's position on regionalism, declaring it as sacrosanct.

According to him, Nigeria should be restructured to full regional autonomy, where each region will be at liberty to operate at its own pace.

"Our position on regionalism is very clear. It is sacrosanct because that is what we are seeking at the moment."

"Nigeria should be restructured to full regional autonomy where each region will be at liberty to operate at its own pace."

"It is unfortunate that the report was done in bad faith to discredit our organisation."

"How can people be so mean to spread such sensitive information that OPC attacked the Yoruba nation agitators? the Yoruba generalissimo queried."

"Such information was wicked, mischievous, and uncalled for and could trigger crisis and cause unnecessary disaffection between the OPC and sons and daughters of Yoruba race."

## NSCDC arrests five suspects for vandalising bridges in FCT

Clement Idoko | Abuja

THE Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has arrested five suspects for vandalising bridges in Abuja, in renewed efforts to protect national assets in the country.

Members of the criminal syndicate were arrested following credible information and surveillance mounted by the Directorate of Intelligence and Investigation (DII) Crack Squad from the national headquarters of the NSCDC with the support of other stakeholders.

Spokesperson for the NSCDC, Mr Olusola Odumosu, who confirmed the arrest in a statement on Monday in Abuja, said van-

dalised five-inch galvanised pipes, angle irons and a hand saw used in carrying out the destruction were recovered from the suspects.

Preliminary investigation, according to him, revealed that most of the suspects are artisans whose activities are domiciled around the crime scene which is located close to the headquarters of Federal Mortgage Bank, Central Business District, Abuja.

The Commandant-General of NSCDC, Dr Ahmed Abubakar Audi, worried by the incessant vandalism and theft of manhole covers on roads in the FCT, directed operatives of the corps to redouble their efforts in ending the menace.



\*Police operatives and patrol vehicles at the scene of the clash in Ojota, Lagos State, on Monday. Photo: Sylvester Okoruwa.