

John Ameh, Onitsha

THE Governor of Anambra State, Mr. Peter Obi, has extended the dusk-to-dawn curfew imposed on Onitsha to six more towns.

The decision to extend the curfew to Okpoko, Ogbaru, Nsajuba, Nkpor, Oboosi and Oba, is to prevent a spill over of the Onitsha violence.

The six communities are near Onitsha, where clashes between members of the National Union of Road Transport Workers and the Movement for the Advancement of the Sovereign have resulted in the death of 12 persons, destruction of properties, and forceful release of over 200 prison inmates.

Shortly before Obi's Chief of Staff, Mr. Chukwura Obi, announced the extension of the curfew, the acting Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Prisons Service, Mr. Okwara Uche Kalu, indicated the guards at the Onitsha Prison for the escape of the inmates.

Addressing officers of the NPS after inspecting the burnt Onitsha Prison, Kalu said he was amazed that no shot was fired by the prison's guards when the hoodlums struck.

He said he was saddened by the growing number of officers in the service, who were

no longer committed to duty.

The acting CG said, "We appreciate the fact that some of you may be going through tough times, but it won't be out of place to find out in the course of investigations that some officers might have colluded with the hoodlums."

"There are many cases of jailbreaks that we can no longer ignore," he said.

"These hoodlums came by night, yet no shot was fired at them, the guards simply ran away. Those who are fired of the job, should file in their resignation letters."

"The prison service's conditions of work are not the worst because compared to other services, the government has made some improvement in recent times."

"The service is being motivated, promotions are being attended to and 65 per cent of those who acquired higher academic qualifications have been upgraded."

Kalu warned that any officer found to have aided the attack on the prison would be shown the way out of the service.

The Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Force Criminal Investigations Department, Abuja, Mr. Ogboma Onovo, who accompanied Kalu on the visit, said he was yet to understand how the hoodlums, reported to be only

nine, overpowered the 16 policemen and four prison guards on duty at the prison.

According to him, government is embarrassed by the development, hence the need to investigate the "criminal circumstances which led to the whole of this mess."

"I am going into the town-

Again, NNPC withholds N31bn

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Excess Crude Oil Proceed Account rose from \$8.33billion in May 2006 to over \$10billion in June.

The minister, who also confirmed that N257billion was shared by the Federal, States and Local Government Areas from the Federation Account in June, explained that the NNPC attributed the non-remittance of the funds to the subsidy on petroleum products.

She said, "We have collectively decided here (FAAC meeting) that starting from July 2006, we are going to ask the NNPC to always give us an invoice and charge us for how much they feel the subsidy is and then we pay them."

"So, there shouldn't be any withholding of funds anymore by the NNPC. I am sure that you are aware that all the three tiers of gov-

ernment collectively have set up the Petroleum Support Fund, which will be managed by the Petroleum Product Pricing and Regulatory Agency."

"So, we hope that from next month it will come into operation and the NNPC will stop further deduction."

On why the NNPC has continued to withhold a part of the oil revenue when the Federal Government and states had set aside N150billion for PSF in the 2006 Appropriation, she said that the budgeted funds were yet to be released by the FG to the NNPC.

The minister said, "We have not released anything to the NNPC because they have never come up to ask us (FAAC) that we should pay them. Instead, the NNPC nets-off right from

ship with my men to study the place. We have 190 criminals out there and we are not good at all for the safety of the society," Onovo said.

He, however, assured the difficulties facing the NPS of funds but noted that they were still expected to "perform the least basic functions" of the service.

About seven cases of attacks on prisons and jailbreaks have been reported in various parts of the country in the last one year.

Two of the incidents occurred in Onitsha alone.

Meanwhile, four inmates returned voluntarily on Tuesday.

source and pays what is due to us after deducting what the subsidy is."

"We have not been asked by the NNPC to pay anything. But now we want to make sure that when the NNPC comes asking us, we would be able to pay. The corporation must however bring all the money into the Federation Account."

Asked if the FAAC would penalise the corporation, Nenadi said the committee could not.

She added, "We have collectively agreed that there should be subsidy and we think collectively as three tiers of government that we don't want Nigerians to pay more for petroleum products than they are already paying."

"And you must agree that the higher the price of crude oil in the oil interna-

day, bringing the total number of returnees to 14.

Also on Tuesday, a truck load of soldiers arrived in Awka and immediately began to patrol the town.

Our correspondent learnt that their arrival was to ward off potential troublemakers.

tional market, the more the level of subsidy that is expected of the three tiers of government. So, basically that is the problem."

"We do appreciate the problem of the NNPC that there is indeed subsidy and we have all agreed that there is subsidy. But what we don't agree on is the process or procedure of setting this subsidy."

On why the Federal Government was making withdrawals from the Excess Crude Oil Proceed Account, she explained that it was to finance the independent power project, the payment of the PAFs Club debt, the debt owed the NNPC and the Brass

NING.

On the claims by the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commis-

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