



₦7,800



₦3,999

METRO PLUS

Policemen chase protesters with tear gas as two die in custody

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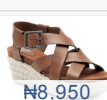
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Afeez Hanafi

Policemen attached to Area 'A' Command, Lion Building, Lagos Island, on Monday fired tear gas canisters to disperse a crowd, which had gone to protest against the death of two residents, Ifedolapo Atansuyi, and one Tope, in police custody.

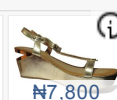
The protesters, who scampered to safety, also accused the command of indiscriminate arrest.



₦8,950



₦8,000



₦7,800



PUNCH Metro learnt that some operatives had earlier raided a bar on Edumare Street, Lagos Island, on Friday, during which about 190 persons, including females, were apprehended in the bar.

A pregnant woman, identified as Afusat Dabiri, who was said to be on her way to a church vigil, was also arrested and detained at the Onikan Police Station. Other persons were held in Adeniji Adele, Oko Awo Police Post and other neighbouring divisions.

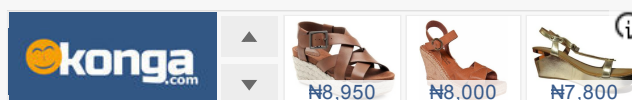
The protesting residents lamented that the police had yet to tell them the offence for which the people were arrested.

While 20-year-old Ifedolapo, a gospel musician, died on Saturday at the police post, Tope, who was suffering from ulcer, died on Monday at Lion Building.

Although the police accused Ifedolapo of selling an iPhone put in his care, his father, Gabriel Atansuyi, told *PUNCH Metro* that he was tortured to make the confession.

The pastor stated that the owner of the phone, said to be worth about N200,000, had engaged some miscreants to torture his son before he was handed over to the police.

He said, “My son said the phone got lost, but the owner insisted that he sold it. When I saw him on Saturday in the cell, he showed me the injuries inflicted on him by those boys before he was handed over to the Oko Awo Police Post. He said the phone got lost, but the torture made him to confess. I agreed to pay the money.



later took me to the Area Commander in Lion Building, who told me that Ifedolapo was dead. He said he committed suicide. But he was murdered. He had no reason to commit suicide.”

One of the protesters, Sijuade Omoworere, said there was no problem until around 2am, when policemen in a van stormed the bar. He added that many people sustained injuries while trying to evade arrest.

“The policemen just came in and said, ‘everybody, on your knees!’ We were all confused and rushed out. Some people got injured. About 197 persons were arrested. There was no fight, no violence.

“On Saturday, Tope’s father went to Lion Building and explained his health condition to the police. He was taken to the Lagos Island General Hospital on Sunday; he didn’t respond to treatment. He was returned to the station and he died this morning (Monday),” he said.

Another resident, Abayomi Johnson, said, “Since Saturday that we have been coming here (Lion Building), no policeman has come out to address us on why the people were arrested. Instead of them to address us, they chased us away with tear gas.

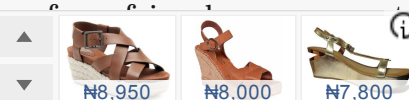
“A pregnant woman, Afusat Dabiri, was going to a vigil when she was arrested. We learnt she had collapsed twice in the cell. She is at Onikan Police Station.”

Folashade Agbaje said her friends, who had come to club on Island, were arrested in their car, adding that the jewellery used by one of them was seized by the policemen.

He said, “Four of my friends; Olaolu, Mariam, Abdul and Akeem, were detained. They live in Ajah and had come to club on the Island. While returning home, they wanted to link the Third Mainland Bridge through Tapa Street when the police arrested them.”

A 61-year-old woman, Mrs. Mulikat Saka, said her two children, Abiola and Tunde, were among those apprehended.

A youth, Yusuf Olasunkanmi, said, “The police didn’t tell us what they did. It is over.”



“I have not been allowed to check him at the Lion Building,” she added.

The Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Olarinde Famous-Cole, confirmed the two deaths to our correspondent via a text message on the telephone.

He said Ifedolapo committed suicide, while Tope died an unnatural death.

He said, “At about 10am on February 25, we received a report of one Ifedolapo Atansuyi, 19 years, who was detained on allegation of stealing an iPhone valued at N180,000. He committed suicide by hanging himself in the cell with his shirt.

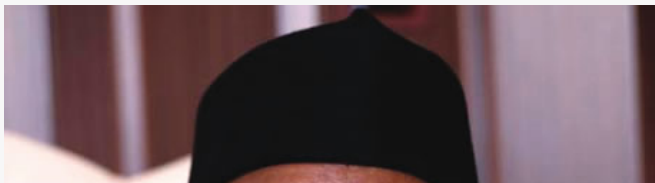
“The other incident is a case of sudden and unnatural death. He (Tope) just slumped and died. The raid was carried out on black spots where criminal elements operate. Investigation is still in progress.”

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