

Black Tuesday: 49 killed as protests turn bloody

Published October 21, 2020



A protester shot dead by soldiers in Lekki, Lagos; hoodlums attack on Orile Police Station, Lagos; and some of the vehicles burnt at Apo Mechanic Village in Abuja ...on Tuesday. Photos: Stanley Ogidi, Olatunji Obasa and Olukayode Jaiyeola

Our Correspondents

Violence that rocked #EndSARS protests across the country worsened on Tuesday with 43 protesters and six policemen losing their lives.

Protesters calling for the disbanding of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigeria Police have been carrying out peaceful demonstrations across the country since October 8.

However, the protests assumed a violent dimension last week when thugs attacked peaceful protesters in Lagos and Abuja.

The hoodlums, who have been attacking protesters in Abuja, became emboldened on Tuesday, when they killed six protesters at Waru, Wumba and Kibuwa

27 protesters, two policemen killed in Lagos

In Lagos alone, no fewer than 29 people, including two policemen, were killed when the police shot protesters in different parts of the state.

In Mushin, 17 people lost their lives during a clash involving hoodlums and policemen attached to the Olosan Division.

The PUNCH gathered that the hoodlums, who reportedly barricaded the Oduwoye Junction in Mushin, denied the Divisional Police Officer, Olosan Division and some policemen, access to the route to a destination in the area.

In the process, it was learnt that there was a confrontation between the hoodlums and the policemen who reportedly retreated to their base.

However, tragedy struck when the policemen, reportedly led by the DPO, reinforced to the Oduwoye Junction and started releasing bullets into the air to scare away the hoodlums.

An eyewitness, who gave his name simply as Ashimiu, said when the hoodlums refused to leave the road, in a bid to disperse them, the policemen allegedly released some bullets into the crowd, adding that no fewer than 17 people had been reported dead.

He said, “People were at Oduwoye Junction in Mushin around 12.30pm and blocked the road but when the DPO of the Olosan Police Station and his team wanted to drive

through the blocked route, they were denied access. This, however, led to confrontation, so they went back to their base.

“A few minutes after, the policemen, led by the DPO, reinforced to the blocked location and started shooting in the air to scare them away from the road. But when they realised that the people were unmoved, they released bullets into the crowd and more than 17 people were killed. Many people also sustained grievous bullet wounds, some of whom were rushed to the Lagos University Teaching Hospital.

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“I have personally seen seven corpses; three corpses at Atewolara Junction, two corpses at Way Street, opposite Oando Filing Station, and two corpses at Oduwoye Junction, opposite the market. Soldiers are in the area to douse the tension and some of the corpses were evacuated by them, while some other corpses were taken away by the families of the victims.”

Two policemen, three protesters killed as hoodlums burn police stations in Lagos

Five persons, including two policemen and three #EndSARS protesters, were also killed during a clash involving policemen attached to Orile Police Division and some protesters in the Orile area of the state.

The PUNCH gathered that the protesters were chanting #EndSARS at the station when the DPO, Orile Division and her policemen allegedly opened fire at the protesters, killing three persons in the process.

Enraged by the development, it was learnt that a clash occurred between the protesters, including hoodlums, and policemen attached to the division and during the attack, the Orile Police Station was set ablaze.

One Bolaji, who witnessed the incident, accused the police of pulling the trigger that killed three of the protesters, adding that two stations were burnt due to the incident.

He said, “Around 9am, when the protesters got to the Orile Police Station, they were chanting #EndSARS and that they don’t want the Divisional Police Officer, popularly known as Iya Rainbow, to head the station again. There was a confrontation between the DPO and the people at the station.

“Annoyed by the development, the people clashed with the policemen and they went to get petrol and set the station ablaze. When the people at Pako area got to know that someone has been shot dead at Orile, it propelled them to burn the station at Pako. The military personnel have brought normalcy in the area. I witnessed everything when the police opened fire, the people dispersed and it was that opportunity that the DPO used in escaping.”

It was learnt that while three protesters were shot head by the police, two policemen died in a reprisal.

However, one Ugo Njoku, who chronicled the Orile attack on Whatsapp, gave the total number of deaths recorded to be five, adding that “DPO ordered police officers to shoot directly at the protesters. Three people fall dead while several others sustained injuries and are rushed to hospital...The two officers killed are the trigger-happy policemen that shot at the protesters.”

Blackout in Lekki tollgate as soldiers shoot seven protesters dead, many injured

In another development in the Lekki area of the state, armed soldiers allegedly shot sporadically at the #EndSARS protesters, killing no fewer than seven persons in the process.

Many protesters were said to have sustained bullet wounds as a result of the attack that suddenly came just after the billboard on the tollgate and the streetlights around

the premises were switched off. It was learnt that the CCTV was also disconnected.

A video recorded by an eyewitness, which was reposted on Instablog9ja, indicated that seven protesters were killed during the attack.

“They have killed more than seven people that I have seen with my eyes. They were killed with real bullets and not even rubber bullets,” the recorder of the footage said.

Prior to the blackout, it was learnt that two soldiers were at the tollgate from the Lekki axis to pledge their support for the protest by the #EndSARS campaigners.

Few minutes after the soldiers came, it was learnt that there was a sudden blackout as a group of armed soldiers advancing from the Ozumba Mbadiwe axis started shooting sporadically into the air and at the protesters.

An eyewitness, Yekini Adedeji, said all the protesters around the tollgate scampered for safety, adding that the soldiers had taken over the premises.

“The soldiers are shooting sporadically, they put off the street light and the billboard to make the place to be in total darkness. They started shooting up but they shot at the protesters as well and I have seen two people that have sustained bullet wounds.

“At first, when the soldiers started shooting, the protesters summoned courage and refused to move. So, they sat on the floor and raised up their flag but along the line, two of the protesters were shot and people started running. There are no protesters at the tollgate and the soldiers have taken over the tollgate. I saw the soldiers myself

Two killed, many injured as hoodlums clash in Ketu

In another development, two people were killed during a clash involving Ikosi Boys and Market Boys in the Ketu area of Lagos State on Monday.

As at 8am on Tuesday, *The PUNCH* saw the hoodlums attacking one another with bottles, stones and other harmful objects around the pedestrian bridge, close to the police station in Ketu.

Motorists and commuters were stranded as vehicular movements were on hold due to the crisis that reportedly started on Monday evening.

It was gathered that the boys were protesting when an altercation reportedly broke out amongst them around 6pm.

The altercation was said to have degenerated into a crisis that sent shivers down the spines of residents and business owners in the area.

Footage of a video trending online showed three victims lying on the street in a pool of their blood.

As seen in the footage, the skull of two of the victims had been broken as their brains were scattered on the street. One of the victims was also seen gasping for breath due to the injuries he sustained during the clash.

People were also seen in the footage lamenting and mourning the circumstances surrounding the death of the victims.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi said, “A fight happened in Ketu but we are not aware that there was any mortality. No death was known to the police.”

Six killed, many injured as hoodlums clash Ikorodu

In another development, no fewer than six persons were killed in the Ogolonto and Garage area of Ikorodu, Lagos.

In Ogolonto, it was learnt that the clash happened after a member of the National Union of Road Transport Worker, purchased a piece of land and settled the wrong people.

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An eyewitness, who identified himself simply as Adesegun, said during the fight, the boys burgled peoples' shops, stopped a truck loaded with bottles, which they used in attacking themselves.

He said, "Ogolonto Boys and Idiroko Boys were involved in the clash, and what happened was that one of the leaders of the NURTW Ikorodu settled some people with N2m after purchasing land and made the announcement during the protest. That was when the fight started and about three people were killed on Saturday but the fight started on Friday. The fight was amongst the union members but it turned into a street fight and lots of people were injured."

It was gathered that three people died in the incident.

In a similar development, three persons were killed during another clash involving hoodlums and cultists in the Garage and Benson areas of Ikorodu.

An eyewitness, Biodun Agbabiaka, said, "On Tuesday, some people had to volunteer themselves to be on the lookout for people robbing members of the public of their valuables after the protest and that was how it turned into a territorial clash, involving cult members.

"As I speak to you, two persons were killed at Garage and one person was killed at Benson and the protesters are not among those that were killed."

Many policemen have been killed – Lagos Police PRO

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, said “It is quite unfortunate that most of our formations have been attacked, our men have been attacked and as I speak with you, many of our men have been killed but I cannot give a precise account of those that have been killed now.

“Most of our formations have been set ablaze and some of our properties destroyed. Two patrol vehicles have been burnt in Ojo Division, Ilemba Hausa is under siege as I speak with you, Amukoko and Orile Divisions are burnt, Cele outpost under Ajegunle has been burnt, Ajeromi Ifelodun Secretariat has been burnt and we are still hearing that they still want to attack policemen going about their lawful duties.”

Two policemen, three others feared killed in Oyo

Hoodlums cashed in on the #EndsSARS protest in the Ojoo area of Ibadan on Tuesday and burnt down the police station in the area.

Our correspondents learnt that five persons, including two policemen, were killed during the attack which happened at 1pm.

The police also confirmed that some of its AK-47 rifles were stolen by the hoodlums, who invaded the place and burnt it down.

One of our correspondents, who visited the scene of the incident at 6:30pm observed that the police station and three vehicles were completely razed down.

Trouble started in the morning as early as 9am when some of the youths blocked the Ojoo end of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. The barricade caused gridlock forcing some motorists to turn back to seek alternative routes while those who could not use this got stuck on the road.

The Commissioner of Police in Oyo State, Joe Enwonwu, confirmed the killing of two policemen and said two were missing in a statement issued by the Police a Public Relations Officer, Mr Olugbenga Fadeyi.

Hoodlums kill Ogun customs officer

In Ogun State, hoodlums, who hijacked the protest on Tuesday killed an officer of the Nigeria Customs Service, Ogun Area Command I , and injured another during an attack on Customs men along Owode-Idiroko road in Ogun State.

The PUNCH gathered that residents of the border communities seized the opportunity of the ongoing protest to demand an end to the incessant killings by operatives of the NSC.

An eyewitness said the youth invaded the patrol base and attacked the NCS officers, with sticks, and dangerous weapons, killing one and injuring another.

The Public Relations Officer of the Command, Hammed Oloyede confirmed the incident in an interview with one of our correspondents.

Hoodlums kill four in Kano

In Sabon Gari area of the Kano metropolis, eyewitnesses said four people were killed when hoodlums attacked #EndSARS protesters.

A security guard at one of the motor spare parts shops at France Road in Sabon Gari told *The PUNCH* that the protest which started peacefully at noon, turned violent when some hoodlums attacked the protesters.

The security guard said, “The protest was initially peaceful, but when the hoodlums came they killed four people and injured many others.”

It was also gathered that the hoodlums looted shops and burnt a car on the Aba road, off Ibo road in Sabon Gari.

Also, the hoodlums invaded St Thomas’ Catholic Church, on Airport road, ransacked and broke the glass windows.

The police said they were not aware of any killing. At a press conference later on Tuesday, the state Police Commissioner Mr Habu Sani, confirmed that no fewer than seven vehicles were burnt.

He, however, said that the situation had since been brought under control.

Two killed in Benin

In Edo State, youths and hoodlums in Benin defied the 24-hour curfew imposed by the state government and clashed with policemen.

During a clash at Santana Market on the Sapele Road, two people were shot dead by the police trying to disperse protesters.

Despite the curfew, youths took over strategic positions on the Ekenwan Road chanting anti-government slogans.

There were protests also in Auchi as youths regrouped at the popular Jattu Junction, allowing only motorists on essential duties passage.

Hoodlums killed two police officers in Abia – PPRO

As of the time of sending this report, the situation in Aba, the Abia State capital was still tense.

Angry youths attacked and set ablaze a police station located along Umuoba road axis of Ogbor Hill.

Also attacked was another police station; Ezicama Police Division located near the popular Bata junction along Aba-Ikot Ekpene Expressway.

When contacted the state Public Relations Officer, PPRO Geoffrey Ogbonna said at Aba, two police officers were killed on Tuesday. He said that he was not aware of the killing of any protester.

The protests in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, became violent when policemen at SARS office shot live bullets while youths were protesting.

Hundreds of youths, who had taken the protest to the disbanded SARS office, expressed dismay that police operatives were still there despite the disbandment of the outfit.

Although, the youth retreated due to the indiscriminate shooting to scare them, they continued chorusing ‘End SARS, END SARS until they were advised by their leaders to leave the area.

When contacted, the State Commissioner of Police, Joseph Mukan, said the office was not operational but that policemen were only deployed there to protect the facility from being attacked following what was going on in other parts of the country.

Armed thugs in ‘government vehicles’ attack #EndSARS protesters

In Abuja, armed thugs conveyed in what appeared to be black government Sports Utility Vehicles with concealed number plates were seen attacking #EndSARS protesters in the Wuse 2 area of Abuja on Tuesday.

In a video that has gone viral on social media, some of the thugs are seen jumping into a black Prado driven by a man in suit on Adetokunbo Ademola Crescent Wuse 2.

The vehicle is seen reversing unto Hospital Avenue and then the doors are flung open while thugs wielding stones and sticks run riot.

Another vehicle, which is a black Range Rover, soon joins the thugs while four buses filled with thugs parked on the roadside as more thugs alight from the buses.

There were unconfirmed reports that the thugs were coordinated by an official of the Department of State Services attached to a top government official.

However, the DSS in a statement by its Spokesman, Peter Afunaya, denied the allegation, adding that the agency could not identify any of the persons in the videos.

Afunaya asked members of the public to ignore such rumours as the agency could not engage in such a dishonourable act.

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IG deploys riot policemen nationwide as violence escalates

Meanwhile, the Inspector-General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, on Tuesday, ordered the deployment of riot policemen nationwide to protect lives and property.

The IG also deployed operatives to strengthen the security around custodial facilities nationwide.

The IG in his directive ordered the commissioners of police in the 36 states of the Federation and the FCT to identify and isolate law-breakers from peaceful protesters, and immediately arrest and diligently prosecute such perpetrators of violence in their respective commands.

The force spokesman, Frank Mba, in a statement titled, 'Attacks on police facilities, others: IG orders deployment of anti-riot police officers,' also disclosed that 12 suspects had been arrested in connection with the attack on two custodial facilities and a police station in Edo State, on Monday.

Five rifles allegedly stolen from the police station were also recovered.

It enjoined the members of the public to avail the force with useful information that can lead to the re-arrest of the fleeing inmates, unlawfully released from the correctional facilities.

Giving an update on the attack by hoodlums at Apo, Abuja, on Monday, in which 15 vehicles were torched and 14 others vandalised, and the second wave of violence at Waru and Wumba communities on Tuesday, the FCT police spokesperson, ASP Mariam Yusuf, said the command had restored calm in the areas.

Eyewitnesses said two people were killed each in Waru, Wumba and Kibuwa.

Stop killing young #EndSARS protesters, Hillary Clinton tells Buhari, Army

In a related development, a former democratic presidential candidate in the United States, Hillary Clinton, on Tuesday called the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd), and the Nigerian Army to stop killing the young #EndSARS protesters.

Clinton, a former American senator and First Lady, made this call in a tweet via her verified Twitter handle, @HillaryClinton, few hours after soldiers opened fire on the

young peaceful protesters calling for an end to police brutality and reform of the police at the Lekki toll gate in Lagos.

Seven were said to have been killed and others injured in the attack.

Cliton's tweet posted at 11.11pm Nigerian time on Monday received over 78,000 retweets within 35 minutes of being posted.

"I'm calling on @mbuhari and the @hqnnigerianarmy to stop killing young #EndSARS protesters. #StopNigeriaGovernment," the tweet read.

NBA, AfBA threaten international criminal proceedings

The Nigerian Bar Association and Africa Bar Association have threatened international criminal proceedings against the Federal Government over the shooting of unarmed protesters by security agencies.

The NBA, in a statement by its President, Olumide Akpata, described the shooting of the unarmed protesters as reckless and lawless, while demanding that the military high command "immediately identify and name the officers involved in this gross professional misconduct for immediate prosecution and dismissal in line with extant laws."

In the same vein, the AfBA, in a statement by its President, Hannibal Uwaifo, vowed to "immediately file formal criminal complaints before appropriate international bodies to open an international inquiry into the irresponsible behaviour of the Nigerian Government masquerading as a democracy."

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