

Lawlessness continues as hoodlums kill cops, burn more police stations, inmates attempt jailbreak

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Burnt bus stop shelter in Gariki, Enugu; Ikoyi Custodial Centre inmates after the attempted jailbreak; and burnt Akeredolu campaign office in Akure on Thursday. Photos: NAN, NANASHI@_RaeRay and Olabode Olatunde on Facebook

Our Correspondents

The reign of terror by hoodlums across the country continued unabated on Thursday with reports of attacks on the police personnel, which resulted in some deaths, and burning of many police stations across the nation.

In some states, inmates of custodial centres were set free by the hoodlums, while in others, the inmates attempted to flee from custody, but their efforts were thwarted by security agents.

Many public buildings were also set on fire by hoodlums across the country.

Police, army storm Ikoyi prison over attempted jail break

Some inmates of the Ikoyi Custodial Centre in Lagos State, on Thursday, attempted to escape after setting a section of the facility on fire.

Personnel of the centre, in collaboration with other security agencies, were said to have foiled the attempt.

The Public Relations Officer, Nigerian Correctional Service, Lagos Command, Rotimi Oladokun, noted that the inmates wanted to take advantage of the ongoing *#EndSARS* protests and the curfew in the state.

“However, the inmates met stiff resistance by the personnel at the centre. The inmates, in their attempted jailbreak, set a section of the custodial centre ablaze. There was no breach of the custodial centre’s security perimeter, as the combined deployment of military and other security agencies ensured the safety of the inmates and the custodial centre,” he added.

However, hoodlums took over major parts of Lagos on Thursday, extorting money from motorists, commercial motorcycle riders and passers-by.

Many parts of the state were barricaded by the thugs, who carried cutlasses, knives and stones.

There was no noticeable security presence in many parts of the state.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, in a statement, said the hoodlums burnt the Ikotun Police Station and damaged the Ojodu Police Station.

He said exhibits at the Ojodu station were also burnt by the gang.

Adejobi explained that the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Research and Planning, Leye Oyebade, and the state Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu, moved round some volatile areas within the state to clear obstructions on major roads.

“The areas where the police chiefs cleared barricades from included Falomo roundabout, Sura-Adeniji and Ilubinrin end of the Third Mainland Bridge, Iyana Oworo and Gbagada end of the Ikorodu Road, Ojuelegba (Surulere) and Apongbon Bridge, on the Lagos Island,” he added.

Hoodlums attack Ondo custodial facility, free inmates

Hoodlums, on Thursday, broke into the National Correctional Centre in Okitipupa, headquarters of the Okitipupa Local Government Area of Ondo State, and released the inmates.

It was gathered that no fewer than 58 inmates were released during the attack, while a vehicle was set ablaze and several items were destroyed on the premises.

The Public Relations Officer, Ondo State Command, NCS, Ogundare Babatunde, confirmed the incident to our correspondent on the telephone.

According to him, the hoodlums numbered over 1,000 and stormed the correctional centre around 10.30am and overwhelmed the security men before gaining entry onto the premises and wreaked havoc.

He said, “When they first came, the security agents around appealed to them not to carry out the attack, so they went back, but they later reinforced, over 1,000 of them, overwhelmed the soldiers and the NSCDC officers, who were trying to stop them.

“They broke the wall of the place; they broke into four out of the six cells and burnt them down. They set ablaze the van on the premises and some of our machines were destroyed. They also forcefully released all the 58 inmates.”

Babatunde, however, noted that the command had been making efforts to recapture the inmates.

Warder killed in Delta attempted jail break

In a similar development, a warder at the Nigerian Correctional Centre, Warri, Delta State, has been confirmed dead during Thursday's attempted jail break by the inmates.

Hoodlums had earlier in the day set the main gate and administrative office of the correctional centre on fire in an attempt to facilitate the jailbreak.

Sources said the inmates, who seemed to have been in communication with the outside world in an effort to escape, snatched a rifle from one of the warders and allegedly shot him dead, and set the administrative building on fire.

The swift response of the men of the 3 Battalion, Nigerian Army, Effurun, to the distress call from the centre after the warders had been overpowered by the inmates, reportedly prevented the attempted jailbreak.

Our correspondent gathered that trouble started when some hoodlums, who claimed to be *#EndSARS* protesters, made their way to the centre and made attempts to free the inmates.

Efforts by the inmates to effect the jailbreak were, however, foiled as soldiers, led by Col. S. Ahmed, arrived on time and repelled the attack.

The soldiers were seen patrolling the facility just as all the 107 inmates were safely contained by the troop as of the time of filing this report.

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Security agents foil attempted jailbreak in Abia

The combined forces of the Nigerian Army, the police, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps and the armed unit of the Nigerian Correctional Centre, on Thursday, repelled what an attempted jailbreak at the Afara Umuahia Correctional Centre.

Though the Controller of Correctional Service, Abia State Command, Ezugwu Julius, and the Public Relations Officer did not take their calls and respond to text messages, a source disclosed that around 8am, some miscreants posing as *#EndSARS* protesters came near the centre, thus arousing the interest of the inmates, “who then started trying to be funny.”

“The action of the inmates attracted the attention of the security personnel at the centre, who immediately called on joint forces to arrest the situation,” the source said.

According to the source, the joint forces started firing gunshots and tear gas in the air to ward off the hoodlums.

Hoodlums raze police station, shoot cops in Umahi’s hometown

The Ohaozara Police Station, Uburu, the hometown of Governor David Umahi of Ebonyi State, was on Thursday, razed down by hoodlums operating under the guise of *#EndSARS* protesters.

An eyewitness, who spoke to *PUNCH Metro* on condition of anonymity, said the hoodlums struck around 1pm and overpowered the policemen on duty, who fled in different directions.

He said the ensuing pandemonium made the villagers living around the station to flee, while the hoodlums stole valuables from the station before burning it down.

“The attackers looted plasma televisions, generators and some guns,” the eyewitness said.

When contacted, the Commissioner of Police in the state, Phillip Maku confirmed the incident and said some of his officers and men were injured in the chaos.

Hoodlums, who allegedly hijacked the #EndSARS protests in Abakaliki, on Thursday, reportedly shot two policemen and injured them in the process.

The victims were said to have been shot at the Central Police Station, Abakaliki, as the hoodlums set ablaze two police divisions in the state.

The inferno destroyed four exhibit vehicles even as the hoodlums broke into the cell and released eight suspects and also destroyed other police property.

According to a statement by the state police spokesperson, DSP Loveth Odah, the hoodlums looted about 30 exhibit motorcycles/plasma TVs/fans and other valuables.

The state Commissioner of Police, Philip Maku, condemned the attack and urged officers and men of the command to remain calm while they continue to manage the situation professionally.

Two policemen feared killed, thugs sack station in Oyo

Two policemen were, on Thursday, feared killed in the Iwo Road area of Ibadan, the Oyo State capital, as some hoodlums set a van belonging to the Gbagi Police Station ablaze alongside other vehicles.

Also, a motorcyclist was allegedly killed by the police in the Abayomi area of the city.

It was gathered that trouble started when a police patrol van with three personnel on board hit a motorcyclist, who later died.

One of the policemen escaped the mob attack, while the other two were burnt alive by the hoodlums.

It was gathered that some suspects had been arrested in connection with the incident and normalcy had been restored in the area.

The arrival of Governor Seyi Makinde in the area calmed frayed nerves as the youth, who insisted on razing down the Testing Ground Police Station, were dissuaded.

Makinde said, “The government, which you brought into power, will do the right thing for you. Yes, there is trust deficit in the land, but I want you to trust me. Whatever happened to you, happened to me. I beg you; I don’t want it to escalate beyond this.

“Every life is important. Your life is important. Don’t waste anybody’s life. Don’t let hoodlums hijack this protest. Don’t destroy anybody’s property.”

In a related incident, there was tension in Iseyin community in the Oke Ogun area of the state on Thursday following the reported attack of the Iseyin Police Station by some hoodlums.

According to a source, the hoodlums stole some rifles from the station before invading the Customs base in the town.

They were also said to have sacked the office of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps in the town.

Efforts to reach the Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Mr Olugbenga Fadeyi, for confirmation were abortive as he could not be reached on the telephone and text message, as well as WhatsApp messages sent to him, had yet to be replied as of the time of filing this report.

Protesters defy curfew, continue destruction of property in Enugu

Protesters, on Thursday, went wild in Enugu, defying the 24-hour dusk-to-dawn curfew imposed by the government by making bonfires and creating tension in the state.

Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi had on Wednesday imposed the curfew on three urban local government areas to stem the destruction of public and private property by hoodlums. ,,

But the protesters were infiltrated by members of the Indigenous People of Biafra, who wielded weapons and intensified attacks on banks and government facilities as well as looting private businesses.

One of our correspondents, who visited some locations, reported that branches of First Bank and United Bank for Africa at Gariki as well as Access Bank on the Presidential Road, Enugu, were attacked.

Also attacked was the University of Nigeria Enugu campus on Ogui new layout. Two commercial buses were also burnt.

Although soldiers from 82 Division and 103 battalion of the Nigeria Army, Enugu were drafted to strategic locations in the state to protect public property, their presence could not deter the hoodlums from their reign of terror.

There were unconfirmed reports that three persons lost their lives following attempts by some of the hoodlums to loot shops around the Nike Lake axis.

The shop owners were said to have resisted the attempts and clashed with the hoodlums.

Akeredolu campaign office, Ondo LG office set ablaze

Four persons have been arrested by the men of the 32 Artillery Brigade of the Nigerian Army for setting ablaze the campaign office of Governor Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State, located on Ilesha Road, Akure.

The arsonists were said to have gained entry into the campaign office around noon on Thursday and set the building on fire after destroying some valuables in it.

The spokesman for the 32 Artillery Brigade, Captain Ayorinde Omojokun, confirmed the arrest to one of our correspondents on the telephone.

“Yes, we have arrested them and we have handed them over to the police for further interrogation,” he stated.

A source said the suspects had made useful confession to the soldiers.

Also on Thursday, another set of hoodlums attacked and set ablaze the secretariat of the Okitipupa Local Government Area and the Okitipupa Divisional Police Station.

It was gathered that trouble started when the policemen were trying to disrupt a protest by the youths to enforce the curfew ordered by the state government.

After the argument with the policemen, some youths went straight to the station and set it on fire and later headed for the council secretariat to raze it down.

At the secretariat, many valuables were reportedly looted, while others were vandalised.

An eyewitness stated that no fewer than 200 seized motorcycles and other property at the police station were taken away by the hoodlums.

Another source said about seven other police stations were attacked by hoodlums in Ondo, Akure and Ore.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr Tee-Leo Ikoro, confirmed the attacks and appealed for caution in burning down police stations.

Hoodlums burn road safety office, court, Delta recreational centre

The Federal Road Safety Corps office and the Delta Recreational Centre on the Asaba-Benin Expressway in Asaba, Delta State, were on Wednesday burnt down by hoodlums.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the two facilities were burnt down around 11pm by rampaging youths.

It was learnt that efforts were also made to burn down the 'A' and 'B' division police stations in Asaba, but the youth were dispersed by policemen, who fired at them.

All vehicles parked on the premises of the FRSC, including heavy-duty vehicles belonging to the corps, were said to have been razed.

Also, the beautification project at the Delta Recreation Centre at Koka junction was set ablaze by the hoodlums.

As of the time of filing this report, the facility was still smouldering, while some youths were seen around monitoring it.

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Governor Ifeanyi Okowa imposed a 48-hour curfew on the state and shut down all public and private schools.

Okowa also hurriedly postponed 2021 budget presentation to members of the state House of Assembly.

Six feared killed in Anambra, police stations burnt

Six persons allegedly died in Anambra State on Thursday during protests in various parts of the state by purported *#EndSARS* demonstrators.

The protesters also allegedly burnt four police stations in Nnewi, Ogidi and Onitsha.

The development made residents of the state to shut down socio-economic activities and retire to their houses before 2pm.

There were bonfires on major roads in the state as well as attacks on road users, who refused to join the protests.

The Onitsha Main Market as well as markets at Nkpor, Nkwo Nnewi, bridgehead, Ekwulobia and Awka were shut down.

In Awka, the state capital, the Onitsha-Enugu expressway was deserted.

At the Ogidi Police Station, a policeman was allegedly killed while attempting to confront the protesters, who claimed that four of their members were shot by the police.

Another corpse was found close to the police station and was carried away by the protesters.

In Nnewi and Onitsha, four persons were reported to have been killed in the mayhem.

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, Haruna Mohammed, did not pick calls put across to him by one of our correspondents and had yet to respond to a text message sent to him on the incidents as of the time of filing this report.

As a consequence, Governor Willie Obiano, on Thursday, declared a 24-hour curfew in the state.

He said he was forced to do so by the prevailing circumstances in the country.

Fayemi extends curfew to Monday, apologises to victims

Ekiti State Governor, Dr Kayode Fayemi, on Thursday, extended the curfew imposed on the state on Tuesday till Monday next week.

Fayemi, who said the state had its fair share of violence and destruction of public property, also apologised to victims of the *#EndSARS* protests in the state.

The governor, who spoke in Ado Ekiti during the inauguration of the judicial panel of inquiry into allegations of human rights violations against police officers, including officers of SARS and other persons, said the panel, headed by Justice Cornelius Akintayo, was “an important first step in responding to the concerns from the *#EndSARS* protesters.”

Police arrest nine looters in Edo

The police in Edo State, on Thursday, arrested nine persons in connection with the looting of a rice warehouse in Benin City despite the 24-hour curfew imposed on the state.

According to information on the state police command's Facebook page, which was also confirmed by a senior police officer, the command received the intelligence report of the burglary and acted promptly.

The post stated, "Today, October 22, 2020, information received by the command is that some suspected criminals/hoodlums burgled the Omoregie rice warehouse located at Upper Sakponba Road, Benin City. Operatives swung into action and arrested the following suspects.

"Favour Etimumore, 19; Chinyere Uyi, 35; Desmond Uguagbe, 24; Daniel Duruji, 22; Iyoha Godstime, 14; Godstime Omosuzi, 15; Nelly Monday, 19; Philip Ewere, 63; and Osas Guobadia, 30."

NBA, NUJ condemn attacks on Rivers court, police stations

The Nigerian Bar Association and the Nigeria Union of Journalists have condemned the destruction of a high court building and burning of two police stations in the Oyigbo Local Government Area of Rivers State by hoodlums.

The Chairman, NBA, Port Harcourt branch, Prince Nyekwere, and the state Chairman of the NUJ, Stanley Job, made their positions known in Port Harcourt on Thursday.

Hoodlums had set ablaze two police stations and the high court building in Oyigbo, while two police personnel also lost their lives.

Nyekwere in a statement expressed bitterness that hoodlums hijacked an otherwise peaceful protest "embarked upon by Nigerian youths questing for better governance and an end to police brutality."

Similarly, Job expressed sadness that the good intentions of the youth, who were protesting against police brutality, was hijacked by hoodlums, noting that the property destroyed would be rebuilt with taxpayers' money.

NSCDC protects critical national assets

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps disclosed on Thursday that it had deployed its personnel across Oyo State in collaboration with sister security agencies to protect critical national assets in view of the ongoing *#EndSARS* protests.

The state Commandant, NSCDC, Iskilu Akinsanya, made the disclosure in a statement titled: ‘Oyo State NSCDC sues for peace from protesters’, signed by the Public Relations Officer in the state, Oluwole Olusegun.

The statement urged the protesters across the state to be law-abiding and avail themselves of the opportunity of the presence of the NSCDC Peace and Conflict Resolution unit in expressing and settling their grievances.

Plateau relaxes curfew to 8pm to 6am

The Plateau State Government has relaxed the curfew it earlier imposed on the Jos North and Jos South local government areas of the state.

Governor Simon Lalong, who announced the relaxation in a statement on Thursday, said the curfew, which began on Tuesday, would now run from 6am to 8pm from Friday October 23, 2020, until further notice.

The statement signed by the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Danladi Atu, said the decision to review the curfew followed resolutions reached at a high-level stakeholders’ meeting chaired by Lalong, one of which was the need for stakeholders to immediately engage communities across the state in a systematic peace dialogue aimed at de-escalating tension.

Obiano budgets N200m to compensate SARS victims

Anambra State Governor, Willie Obiano, has set aside N200m to compensate victims of the defunct Special Anti-Robbery Squad in the state.

Obiano, who disclosed this in a broadcast to the people of the state on Thursday, said the fund was inbuilt into the 2021 budget proposal that would soon be laid before the state House of Assembly.

He said he had also set up a judicial panel of inquiry to look into the petitions of SARS victims in the state, adding that it in response to the demands of the *#EndSARS* protesters in the state.

Rivers banks, markets shut

Commercial banks along Ikwerre Road in Diobu area of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, did not open for business on Thursday following clashes between hoodlums and the police in the area on Wednesday.

The popular Mile 1 and Mile 3 markets, as well as business premises in Diobu, also did not open for business as traders remained indoors for fear of being attacked by hoodlums, even as there was palpable tension in the state.

PUNCH Metro gathered that there was a failed attempt by some hoodlums disguising as protesters to set fire on the Mile 1 Police Station on Ikwerre Road on Wednesday, but they were repelled by policemen, who cordoned off the facility.

FG, NMA order compulsory treatment of victims

The Federal Government, on Thursday, said it was considering “emergency medical services” as a result of civic unrest in some parts of the country.

It directed that casualties of the *#EndSARS* protests arriving federal tertiary hospitals “with evocative injuries should not be rejected on account of inability to pay for

service.”

The directive was contained in a statement by the Permanent Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Health, Abdulaziz Abdullahi.

He said, “All such persons are to receive treatment without delay. This administration places priority on the health and well-being of citizens and residents, and is committed to ensuring that lives are not lost needlessly.

“Meanwhile, all persons are reminded to still adhere under all conditions to non-pharmaceutical measures when outdoors, especially the use of face masks and hand sanitisers as well as social distancing in order to preserve the gains we have made in stemming community transmission of COVID -19 in Nigeria.”

Similarly, the Nigerian Medical Association, on Thursday, directed all its chapters nationwide to make their members available to provide emergency services for victims of the #EndSARS protests.

The body also suspended its ongoing Physicians’ Week barely 24 hours after the suggestion by Nigeria Association of Resident Doctors.

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The President, NMA, Prof. Innocent Ujah, who announced the decisions in a statement issued in Abuja, asked the relevant authorities to provide security and ensure free movement for doctors, ambulances and other healthcare workers.

IPOB responsible for Rivers killings, police stations’ attack – Command

The police in Rivers State have said members of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra were responsible for the killing of police personnel and burning of two police stations in the state between Tuesday and Wednesday.

The spokesman for the state police command, Nnamdi Omoni, said this in a statement issued on Thursday.

Omoni said over 500 members of IPOB invaded the state and unleashed mayhem on Oyigbo Local Government Area and other parts of the state, adding that they burnt two police stations in Oyigbo and killed two policemen before proceeding to Port Harcourt, where they launched a failed attempt to set the Mile 1 Police Station ablaze.

The Commissioner of Police, Joseph Mukan, the statement said, appealed to residents of the state to remain calm and obey the curfew imposed by the state government.

Emmanuel imposes 15-hour curfew in A'ibom

Akwa Ibom State Governor, Mr Udom Emmanuel, has imposed a curfew from 9pm on Thursday to noon on Friday, October 23, 2020.

The Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Ini Emem Obong, who disclosed this in a statement on Thursday, said the curfew followed violent manifestations of protesters in the state.

He noted that the curfew was necessary to forestall a further breakdown of law and order as well as to protect lives and property.

The commissioner stated, “Due to the violent manifestations of some persons masquerading as #EndSARS protesters trying to create chaos this evening in Uyo, the capital city of Akwa Ibom State, the governor, Mr Udom Emmanuel, has declared a curfew effective from 9pm today, Thursday, October 22, 2020, till midday tomorrow, Friday, October 23, 2020.

“This action is taken to protect lives and property of citizens and the restoration of law and order in our state. Within the period of this curfew, there will be an absolute

cessation of movement except for essential service providers, who must show valid means of identification.”

Hoodlums kill Abuja trader, threaten to attack market

There was panic among traders at the Gudu Market in Abuja, on Thursday, following the killing of a man by hoodlums.

Details of the killing were hazy, but it was gathered that the incident caused panic as traders and shop owners quickly locked down their business premises and fled.

The police, however, mobilised to the market shortly after the incident.

This happened three days after thugs set ablaze 15 vehicles and vandalised 14 others at the Apo Mechanic Village, and attacked Waru and Wumba villages, a few kilometres from the Gudu Market.

An official of the Gudu Amalgamated Traders Association said the thugs, who killed the unnamed man, vowed to attack the market at night.

He expressed fear over the safety of their investments in the market.

A viral video of youths wielding sticks and cutlasses in the Lokogoma area of the city also put the residents on edge.

The FCT police spokesperson, ASP Mariam Yusuf, confirmed the Gudu Market incident, adding that operatives had been deployed to provide security in the facility.

By Friday Olokor, Samson Folarin, Peter Dada, Dele Ogunyemi, Edward Nnachi, Wale Oyewale, Raphael Ede, Matthew Ochei, Tony Okafor, Abiodun Nejo, Olufemi Olaniyi, Dennis Naku, James Abraham, Sunday Nwakanma, Sampson Itode and Patrick Odey

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