

Police go after looters, 483 arrested in Lagos, Plateau, Anambra, others

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Some suspected looters arrested during the house-to-house raids in Osogbo, Osun State...on Sunday. Photos: @HameedOyegbade

- **We will fish out looters, Lagos, Osun, Akwa Ibom police commands vow**
- **14 killed during looting of Kogi, Adamawa, Taraba palliative warehouses**
- **Palliatives in warehouses, evidence Buhari isn't our problem – Daughter**

Our Correspondents

The police on Sunday ordered their officers and men to go after those who were looting private and government establishments under the guise of #EndSARS protests.

Police commands in Akwa Ibom, Osun, Plateau, Kano and Anambra states in separate interviews with The PUNCH, said they had stepped up efforts to arrest suspected

looters.

Already, no fewer than 483 suspected looters have been arrested in Lagos, Akwa Ibom, Osun, Anambra, Kano and Plateau states.

Peaceful protests by youths calling for the scrapping of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigeria Police Force turned violent on Tuesday when soldiers shot peaceful protesters in Lekki, Lagos.

Policemen and thugs also attacked protesters across the country. Police stations, government buildings and vehicles have been vandalised by thugs.

On Friday, the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), said no fewer than 69 people died in the protests.

Since Thursday last week, looters, have been attacking stores, where COVID-19 palliatives were kept, as well as residents of politicians in Oyo, Plateau and Akwa Ibom states.

Kano police command arrests 40 looters – PPRO

But on Sunday, the police said they had begun clampdown on the looters.

No fewer than 40 persons have been arrested in connection with the looting at the Sabon Gari area of the Fagge Local Government Area of Kano State on Tuesday.

The Public Relations Officer of the state Police Command, Abdullahi Haruna, disclosed this in an interview with The PUNCH in Kano on Sunday.

He said the looters were apprehended in various parts of Sabon Gari with the exhibits (looted goods), which were with the police.

“Over 40 suspects were arrested and they were apprehended with the exhibits (the goods they stole from their victims).

Recall that some miscreants, who hijacked the #EndSARS protests, looted the multi-million naira Galaxy Mall at Sabon Gari, Kano on Tuesday.

In Akwa Ibom State, the Commissioner of Police, Andrew Amiengheme, said that the command had arrested 10 suspected looters and recovered stolen goods estimated at several millions of naira, following Thursday’s looting of private and government establishments in the state.

READ ALSO: Looting of palliative warehouses continues in Abuja, Adamawa, Kogi, deaths recorded in stampede

Speaking to one of our correspondents on Sunday, through the command’s Public Relations Officer, Odiko Macdon, the police commissioner said, “Officers have been mobilised to every nook and cranny of the state” to fish out the looters.

Over 80 suspects arrested in Osun – Police

Also, the Osun State Police Command on Sunday said over 80 suspects had been arrested across the state in connection with the attack and looting of government and many privately-owned establishments in the state.

The spokesperson for the command, Yemisi Opalola, in a chat told The PUNCH that the police had also recovered some of the items looted in some parts of the state on Saturday.

Opalola also said the command had already sent its men after perpetrators of the looting and urged those in custody of the looted items to return them.

“If they fail to do so, we will fish them out. Already, over 80 people are in our custody in connection with the crime. We have also recovered some of the looted items,” Opalola said.

Earlier on Sunday, no fewer than 30 suspects, who were arrested in connection with the looting of government and some privately owned property in some parts of the state on Saturday, were paraded.

Some of the suspects were apprehended by youth volunteers in the Ogo Oluwa area of Osogbo after government had imposed a 24-hour curfew on the state to stem the rising violence.

Showing the suspects to journalists on Sunday in Osogbo, the Special Adviser to Osun State Governor on Security, Abiodun Ige, warned that the government would not condone any act of lawlessness.

She said, “The government condemns looting and destruction of property by hoodlums in some parts of the state. These suspects would be handed over to the police.”



A total of 118 suspected looters have been arrested in Jos, Plateau State. The suspects, it was gathered, were arrested by soldiers of Operation Safe Haven.

Some hoodlums arrested by Operation Safe Haven for allegedly looting government properties in Jos, Plateau State

It was further learnt that the suspects were arrested in different parts of the state for looting government warehouses and property belonging to individuals despite the curfew imposed by government. .

Commander of the Operation Safe Haven, Major General Chukwuemeka Okonkwo, who paraded the suspects at the command's headquarters in Jos on Sunday, said the suspects were arrested with items which they looted at the warehouses of the Plateau State Agricultural Development Agency and other places .

He said "The suspects arrested include 105 males and 13 females. They destroyed the PADP warehouse and were arrested at Dogon Dutse around Angwan Rukuba. Some of them were also arrested at West of Mines as well as Dogon large at Customs warehouse".

According to the commander, items recovered from the suspects include fertilisers, pumping machines, agro-chemicals, generators, trailer tubes and farming items.

On his part, the Police Public Relations Officer in Anambra State, Haruna Mohammed, said six persons had been arrested in the state for looting

"Six suspects have been arrested in connection with the recent attacks and effort is being intensified to arrest other fleeing perpetrators in order to bring them to book"

On Saturday, hoodlums looted a store where materials meant for flood victims were kept in Awka, the state capital.

In the Federal Capital Territory, the police on Sunday deployed a helicopter for aerial surveillance following the looting of warehouses in Abuja.

On Sunday, hoodlums looted warehouses at Idu Industrial Estate, Jabi, Abuja.

A few hours after the incident, a chopper was seen flying over the location and the surrounding areas while additional police men were deployed to ward off the invaders who were undeterred by the volleys of tear gas canisters released by security forces.

This happened 24 hours after suspected hoodlums were prevented from raiding a warehouse where COVID-19 palliatives were kept at Area 10, Garki.

Armed policemen on guard duty at the Garki warehouse fired gunshots into the air and chased away the youth.

Speaking to The PUNCH on the inability of the police to stop the looting, the FCT Command spokesperson, Mariam Yusuf, said the police were working to contain attacks on public and public property using reasonable force.

She explained that the police were handling the lawlessness with tact to avoid loss of lives and injuries.

She noted that operatives had been deployed to protect public facilities, adding that they were being tactful in handling the situation.

On its part, the Rivers State Police Command called on residents of the state to be more vigilant and look out for criminal elements who were bent on looting property.

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The spokesman for the command, Nnamdi Omoni, made the call during an interview with one of our correspondents in Port Harcourt on Sunday.

Lagos police warn residents against buying looted goods

The Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, in an interview with The PUNCH, advised residents of the state against buying looted goods.

He said, “Those that might fall victim of buying or receiving stolen goods, they must know that a receiver is liable under the law. If a receiver is buying a product that is cheaper than the real amount at the open market, then he should know it is a stolen item and that is what we call guilty knowledge. If I am to buy a product at the rate of N1m and somebody is telling you to buy it for N50,000, don’t buy such a thing.

“A looter will not sell a stolen product at the actual amount because he/she won’t have a quick buyer. So, because they don’t want to hold the stolen product for long, they will sell at very cheap prices. People must be careful of what they buy. If there is a need for them to buy anything, they should go to the open market or the shopping mall and buy there.

“They should be careful of buying used items because they might likely buy some of the stolen items and they would be arrested as the investigation continues.

When asked about the number of suspects arrested in connection with the looting, arson and vandalism in Lagos State, Adejobi said, “I can’t give any figure on the number of suspects arrested in connection with the looting, arson and vandalism across the state.

But the Lagos State Government had on Saturday said it would prosecute 229 suspected hoodlums, who were arrested for arson and looting last week.

Meanwhile, people, whose relatives were killed during last week's #EndSARS protests and those who lost their property, recounted their experiences on Sunday.

Some of the victims, in separate interviews with The PUNCH, explained how their relatives were killed in the protests.

'My brother killed by police escort of VIP'

Miss Olawumi Abolarinwa, a younger sister of the late 33-year-old tailor, Mr Olatunde Abolarinwa, said that her brother died allegedly from the bullet of a mobile policeman in the convoy of a very important person at Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State on Tuesday evening.

Olawumi said the policeman shot sporadically to clear the road of #EndSARS protesters so that the convoy of the VIP could pass.

She said, "My brother, who had closed from his shop was on his way home when the incident happened. According to eye witnesses, he wanted to cross the road when the bullet hit him in the chest."

The bereaved sister said her only brother and father of three, "was the breadwinner of the family and trying his best to ensure it was well with everybody in his immediate and extended families."

In Benin, the Edo State capital, Isiraojie Moses, said his house within the vicinity of the Oko Correctional facility was looted and burnt.

He said, "On Monday last week, the protest started between the ADP Junction and Central Junction. The protest wasn't violent at first as they were just burning tyres on

Airport Road. Then within a moment they came into the barracks shouting ENDSARS, EndBuhari and they started throwing stones which destroyed roofs and hit us in our living room.

“At the same time, we left the building through the back and we told them that we identified with the protest. They promised not to burn the house because we told them that we identified with the protest.

“Later, they (hoodlums) came with guns and broke the jail and most of the prisoners escaped. So after the melee ended, I came out and I saw that my house was on fire. My family came down to salvage whatever we could.

“They (the hoodlums) took two plasma television sets, laptop computers, my mother’s jewel, while my brother’s credentials were burnt alongside many other items. They took the goats we were rearing at the backyard. My mother took a loan to start the business and everything went down the drain. My clothes, my school files and other items were also destroyed.”

The Managing Director, Tuns Farm, Osogbo, Mr Taofeek Badmus, said the loss recorded by the company as a result of Saturday’s attack by the hoodlums was over N500m.

Badmus in a chat with The PUNCH also said a member of staff of the company, Mr Abdul-Rasheed Olawale, was shot dead by the hoodlums during the attack.

READ ALSO: ‘Hoodlums planning attacks against IOCs, govt facilities’

Another victim of Saturday’s hoodlum attack, Mr Abayomi Oyedeji, who is the Chairman of the Irepodun Local Government Area, said every item in his private residence including window blind and kitchen utensils were carted away.

In Kano State, Ahaji Ahmed Sufi, the owner of the multi-million naira Galaxy Shopping Mall in Sabon Gari, said N246m worth of goods were lost to looters .

In Oyo State, Alice Adejumo, mother of 15-year-old Lekan Adejumo, who was shot in Ogbomoso, Oyo State during the #EndSARS protest in the town said she had exhausted her savings and no longer had money to buy drugs for the boy to be treated.

Speaking in an interview with The PUNCH on Sunday, she said Lekan was allegedly shot by the police on his way to church last week.

The distraught mother said Lekan was still on admission at the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Teaching Hospital, for the past 15 days ago.

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