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Army and Police in bloody fight, 8 reported killed, in Badagry, Lagos State

May 25, 2011



Alhaji HAFIZ
RINGIM
Inspector
General of
Police

On **24 May**, soldiers from the 242 Recce Battalion, Iberepo, near Badagry in Lagos State, attacked and killed several policemen, in apparent reprisal against the killing of a soldier by a policeman, the previous night.

The trouble between the two parties started around 8.30pm on the night of Monday 23 May, but there are at least two versions of the incident that sparked it.

According to one account, a soldier dressed in mufti and who was escorting a vehicle loaded with goods from the Nigeria\Benin Republic border, was accosted by a police officer attached to the Lagos State Police Rapid Response Squad (RRS), who demanded to search the vehicle. The soldier had challenged the policeman and threatened to disarm him

if he did not allow the vehicle free passage. Provoked by that challenge, the policeman shot the soldier at close range, killing him instantly.

The second account, by someone who claimed to have witnessed the encounter, said the soldier, a staff sergeant who was on his motorcycle, was flagged down by the policemen at a check-point. Despite showing his identification card, the police personnel were still not satisfied about his identity and an argument ensued. As the soldier made to ride off, a policeman shot him from behind. The account said the soldier managed to phone his colleagues on anti-robbery patrol who rushed to rescue him, but only found him dead.

The sources said that four of the policemen at the check-point were promptly arrested by police authorities. Seeking to avert a crisis, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), Mr Saliu Samuel; the head of the State Security Service (SSS) in the area; and the Commanding Officer of the 242 Battalion, Ibereko, promptly met to calm the rising tensions.

In spite of those good efforts, some soldiers set out early the next morning, attacking any policeman in sight, and in defiance of a No-violence order given to them by the commander of the barracks, Colonel Nabasa. Some of them stormed the branch of [Oceanic Bank](#) in the town and attacked the policemen guarding it, and even some bank customers. From there, they blocked roads and searched vehicles to fish out any policemen on board.

The sources further said that on learning of the attacks, the DPO suggested to his DCO that they should meet with the commander of the Army Barracks to sue for peace. Somewhere

on that mission, some soldiers opened fire and shot the two officers, and another policeman, dead. Town residents say the bodies of the three slain police officers were left at the kerb at Aradagun bus stop on the Lagos-Badagry expressway. The DPO's orderly and driver were critically wounded, but they made it to a hospital.

Two police patrol vehicles belonging to the Police Rapid Response Squad (RRS) were subsequently set ablaze, while their occupants were chased and shot dead. Up till late in the day, sources said soldiers were still on rampage, searching for policemen to attack. Some members of the Police Mobile Unit were also said to be threatening a full-scale war with the soldiers.



Lt Gen A. O.
IHEJIRIKA
Chief of Army
Staff

In Abuja, the federal capital, some reports said the Police Force headquarters had directed

the commanders of all anti-riot (MOPOL) units to maintain the peace while the authorities meet to iron out the problem. The reports said the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Alhaji Rafiz Ringim, had met with the Chief of Army Staff, to call his men to order.

In a press release signed by the Force Public Relations Officer (FPRO), Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Olusola Amore, the IGP enjoined officers and men on both sides to exercise restraint and stop the attacks. He also ordered a high-powered investigation into the incident.

In Lagos, the State Police spokesman, Mr Samuel Jinadu, told newsmen there was no cause for alarm as the situation had been brought under control. The Public Relations Officer of the Lagos-based 81 Division of the Nigerian Army, Lieutenant Colonel Kayode Ogunsanya, also said the situation had been brought under control, stressing the incident would be thoroughly investigated.

There had been several clashes between members of the various security agencies in the middle years of the last decade. In one notable incident on 4 October 2005, policemen and soldiers clashed at the Ojuelegba area of Lagos State, leaving five policemen dead, the Police Area Command headquarters razed, 60 vehicles including 20 police jeeps set ablaze and 34 'awaiting trial' detainees freed from the police cells.

However, such incidents had not occurred in recent years, partly because successive helmsmen of the key agencies had been laying greater emphasis on inter-agency

coordination and cooperation.

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- 1.  segun | May 25, 2011 at 6:23 pm

If that DCO dies, I will not agree with the Army. I must die also.

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