

**Good Afternoon! Tuesday January 10, 2012****Services**

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Fuel subsidy protests**3 shot dead, 43 injured****•Kano Govt House attacked, dusk to dawn curfew imposed****...DPO arrested for shooting protesters in Lagos**

From DESMOND MGBOH, Kano,
 OLUWOLE FAROTIMI, BIMBOLA OYESOLA and CHRISTOPHER
 OJI, Lagos

Tuesday, January 10, 2012

Three persons were killed yesterday by security agents in Lagos and Kano states as Nigerians marched out in their millions to protest the removal of fuel subsidy by the Federal Government. Over 45 persons were also injured in the melee that characterized the protests and while no fewer than 30 vehicles were vandalized by irate youths who stormed Kano State Government House.

**Photo: Sun News Publishing**

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In Lagos, five motorcycles were set ablaze by the protesters and vehicles vandalized in Ikorodu area of the state.

The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Trade Union Congress (TUC) and civil society groups had kicked against the January 1, 2012 removal of fuel subsidy, which has led to astronomical increase in prices of fuel and other commodities.

Yesterday, the nationwide strike, protests and rallies called by the Labour centres and civil society groups swept like wildfire as Nigerians came out in their millions to express their opposition to the subsidy removal.

In Kano State, a 25-year-old student of Bayero University, Kano (BUK), Alhaji Bashir Musa Zango and a 27 year-old Alhaji Abdulmalik Rabi Badawa, were shot dead by security agents.

No fewer than 40 persons were also injured in the protest, just as the Kano State Government imposed a dusk to dawn curfew in the state following the violent demonstrations.

The protesters, in their thousands, had marched through some of the streets in the state capital before arriving the Government House at about 11.00am. They eventually pulled down the fence of the Kano State Government House, facing Alhaji Sabo Barkin Zuwo Road, in the course of the protest.

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**Weekend
Sun**

Irked by what was seen as a disappointing reception, the protesters equally vandalized no fewer than 30 vehicles parked in the Office of the Secretary to the State Government (SSG) and torched a section of the office.

A Red Cross official, Alhaji Musa Danladi Abdullahi, told the Daily Sun at the Abdullahi Wase Specialist Hospital that at least 14 injured persons were rushed to the hospital while confirming that out of the figure, seven were victims of gunshot.

Abdullahi, who is the Executive Secretary of Red Cross in Kano State, said 16 other persons were also rushed to the Murtala Mohammed Specialist Hospital, noting that 11 of them had gunshots injuries even as he indicated that the casualty figures were likely to increase by the end of the day.

At the Accident and Emergency Unit of the Abdullahi Wase Specialists Hospital, Daily Sun observed several cases of wounded persons lying in different conditions of stress and pain. Doctors were seen battling to attend to them and appealing to people to donate blood for some of the injured persons.

Thousands of protesters started flooding the state capital as early 7a.m following the directives of the state chapter of the NLC that the workers should converge for a rally at the Race-Course Ground in the state capital.

Trouble, however, broke out when the venue of the rally was shut against the NLC, resulting in the relocation of the rally towards the Government House and the Silver Jubilee Square.

Security forces threw tear gas to disperse the angry protesters while the crowd responded with stones and sachet water. The situation became unruly as the demonstrators forced their way into the complex accommodating the office of the Secretary to the State Government, surging further towards the seat of power. It was at that point that the police, using their armoured personnel vehicles, started shooting into the air to scare away the protesters. In the process, stray bullets hit some of them.

Police Commissioner in the state, Idris Ibrahim, said he could not say the exact number of arrests that was made, saying investigation into the incident is still in progress. He said that the protest was hijacked by miscreants.

In Lagos, commercial and social activities were grounded as protesters took over major roads in the state.

The protest turned bloody at Ogba area when a youngman, identified as Mr. Ademola Aderinola, was shot dead and three others injured on Yaya Abatan road.

The deceased was said to be playing football on the street when he was allegedly shot dead by the Divisional Police Officer (DPO)

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in-charge of Pen Cinema police divisional headquarters, Mr. Segun Olubunmi.

Policemen, led by the DPO, were said to have stormed the area in a patrol vehicle, marked RRS 101 LA and opened fire on the protesters.

The DPO, a chief superintendent (CSP) has since been arrested and handed over to the State Criminal Investigation Department. Panti, for interrogation.

Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Yakubu Alkali, confirmed the arrest of the DPO, saying he had earlier warned that no policeman should fire a canister at the protesters much less a live bullet.

He said he took the decision for DPOs to lead their teams personally to avoid embarrassment of indiscriminate shooting by their subordinates.

He said he was shocked when preliminary investigation showed that the DPO personally fired the shot that killed the protester.

Handing over the DPO to detectives from SCID, Alkali said: "You are on your own. I was not there when you fired the shot. You and God know the truth; but the law must take its course. So, I am handing you over to SCID for interrogation.

The police boss commended other DPOs, who obeyed his instruction not to shoot at protesters, saying, 'the idea of deploying police to monitor the protest was not to kill but to prevent hoodlums from hijacking the protests.'

At Ikorodu, the protests turned violent when hoodlums hijacked the demonstration, looting property and obstructing traffic. In the process, about five motorcycles were set ablaze while several vehicles were also vandalised.

The protesters and members of civil society coalition had, in the early hours of the day, trekked long distances from different parts of Lagos to the Gani Fawehimi Park located in Ojota area of the state to lend their voices against the fuel subsidy removal.

They demanded that the Federal Government revert to the old price and address the threatening security situation in the country.

Addressing the gathering of protesters amidst philosophical songs of the late Afro beat musician, Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, to capture the reality of the Nigerian situation, frontline human rights activist, Mr. Femi Falana, urged Nigerians to resist attempts to inflict more pains on the people through the fuel subsidy removal.

Flanked by leaders of other rights groups who wore white T-shirts with the inscription: 'Kill Corruption, not Nigerians', 'stop killing us with executive lies', remove Boko Haram, restore fuel subsidy', Nigerians are already subsidizing enough; no education, no health, no light'; Falana noted that Nigeria remained the only oil-producing country where petroleum products are not subsidized.

He urged the security organizations to cooperate with the masses to

force the government to have a re-think on the issues, lamenting that the country was been governed by 'mosquitoes, cockroaches and rats'. Also addressing the protesters, Secretary General of the TUC, John Kolawole, charged Nigerians that the Monday struggle was the beginning, warning that Labour would not relent until the price of petroleum is reverted to N65.

"Tomorrow, we will face Lagos Island and go to Lekki, everybody must be involved; all the offices, markets must continue to remain shut.

"We are also appealing to our religious leaders to pray for Nigeria in churches and mosques and after that let everybody come out to join the protest, no retreat, no surrender", he said.

Former Presidential Aspirant, 76 years old dr. Tunji Braithwaite, in his speech at the rally challenged Nigeria to see the protest as the beginning of the revolution in Nigeria.

In his words: "The Nigeria revolution takes off today, No force on earth can stop this revolution. The struggle that we have been working on has finally taken off today.

"Let the Military and other security forces join hand with us. We must all possess our right, going back on fuel is not the only thing but reducing corruption to the barest minimum and cutting down on bogus salary".

Others who addressed the protesters include, Femi Falana, wife of the Late Human Rights lawyer, Chief Gani Fawehinmi, Mrs Ganiat Fawehinmi, Fuji Artist, Wasiu Ayinde and Actor, Jide Kosoko, the Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), who has promised to continue with the medical support, and the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA)

Meanwhile, the organised labour and its allies in the civil liberty organization have expressed satisfaction at the level of success recorded on the first day of the indefinite general strike, even as they vowed to continue the struggle despite the death of a protester in Lagos yesterday.

In the same vein the organized labour has appealed to Nigerians to shun violence, even as it warns that strikebreakers who capitalise on the strike to extort Nigerians would be seriously dealt with.

A medical practitioner, Dokun Adedeji, who was part of the rally, said he was moved to come out to protest the hike in the prices of petroleum products because of the rate at which Nigerians are dying due to their inability to pay medical bills.

He pointed out that a patient that had fracture of his femur could not afford to pay N10,000 for immediate treatment recently in his place of work, prompting him to part with the money for the man to be treated . Other coalition groups, who spoke at the park, moderated by the Afenifere scribe, Comrade Yinka Odumankin, remarked that they would continue the strike and protests until government accede to their demands

A former Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs in the state, Mr. Rotimi Agunsoye, said the President Goodluck Jonathan has no option other than to listen to the yearnings of the people that elected him by reverting to the old prices of petrol, noting that to remain adamant on the issue may put the President at loggerheads with the people.

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