

Three Feared Killed as Security Operatives Clash With Yoruba Nation Agitators at Oyo Govt Secretariat

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*** Igboho disowns invaders, demands probe**

Kemi Olaitan in Ibadan

No fewer than three people suspected to be part of the Yoruba Nation agitators, who invaded the Oyo State Secretariat, Agodi, Ibadan, were feared killed yesterday in a clash with security operatives.

It was also learnt that 20 of the agitators were also arrested.

Some suspected Yoruba Nation agitators who were masked yesterday invaded the state government secretariat, stationing themselves at different locations within the area.

This situation, according to eyewitnesses, sent panic to the residents and road users.

Business owners and residents around Bodija, Ikolaba, and Awolowo Road, quickly locked their shops and doors while others who were about to open for the day's business returned home to avoid being caught in the crossfire. It was gathered that the security operatives on duty at the Secretariat were overwhelmed and unable to disperse the agitators until the arrival of policemen from the state command and other agencies, including the 2 Division of the Nigerian Army.

Operatives of the state security network codenamed Amotekun were also on the ground.

Road users en route to the secretariat were diverted along Customs Junction as the Secretariat-Queen Elizabeth Road was cut off to traffic. Efforts of the Executive Assistant to the Governor on Security, CP Sunday Odukoya (rtd), to calm the situation were resisted by the agitators, who insisted on hoisting their flag within the secretariat.

But the state police command who confirmed the incident in a statement by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Adewale Osifeso, said 20 suspects were arrested.

He disclosed that those arrested were found in possession of three pump

action guns; 291 life cartridges; two expended cartridges; 67 cutlasses; five bullet-proof vests; six pair of boots; 10 megaphone public address system; three O'odua Styles beret caps; seven belts; 11 Oodua Nation Army camouflage uniforms; one unregistered Nissan Urban Caravan bus and three TVS motorcycles.

According to him, the state police command, in concert with some members of its sister agencies, successfully thwarted the attempt by the "Yoruba Nation Agitation Group", who he said were driven by a separatist agenda to forcefully takeover the state government secretariat.

Osifeso stated that the suspects, who were in military camouflage, came heavily armed in an unregistered Silver-coloured Nissan Urban Caravan Bus containing cutlasses, pump action rifles, cartridges, assorted charms, and an O'odua Nation agitation flag, adding that they were overpowered and completely suppressed by officers and men of the command in concert with sister security agencies who acted in swift response to intelligence gathered following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to the situation.

He maintained that the command viewed the act as criminal, unpatriotic, and a clear case of treasonable felony and terrorism that would attract adequate sanctions under the laws of the land, assuring the residents of the state that the command remains unwavering in the protection of lives and property.

Osifeso stated further that the Commissioner of Police has detailed a highly powered investigation team led by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of the state Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to demystify circumstances surrounding the incident and as well expand the network of arrests through painstaking intelligence-driven investigation.

Meanwhile, the leader of the Yoruba Nation agitators, Chief Sunday Adeyemo who is popularly known as Sunday Igboho has dissociated himself from the invasion of the Oyo State Government secretariat.

Igboho said he did not have a hand in the invasion, and charged Governor Makinde to institute a proper investigation to fish out the people behind the attack and their sponsors.

He further urged the governor to ascertain the motive behind the invasion, adding that the people behind it should be unveiled, arrested, and prosecuted.

Igboho further reiterated his commitment to the peace and security of the Yorubaland, noting that he would never be part of anything whatsoever that could disturb the peace of the region.