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Transporters' clash claims five in Abeokuta

EMAIL

Written by Kolade Larewaju
Wednesday, 30 July 2008

THE factional clash between rival members of the National Union of Road Transport Workers in Ogun State took a frightening dimension yesterday as no fewer than five persons were killed and 10 others injured in an early morning clash.

Journalists, who tried to cover the bloody killings were not spared as one of them; Abdulfatai Babatunde of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) received machete cuts and had to be rushed to the hospital by his colleagues.

For the better part of the day all motor parks were closed leaving commuters stranded while all markets around the garages were also closed.

Trouble started in the early hours of yesterday when one of the factions allegedly stormed Kuto Garage and attacked the leaders in control of the garage with guns, machetes, axes and charms, killing five and injuring no fewer than three others.

Among those said to have been killed was one Alhaji Musiliu Alasela, popularly known as "Asela" who, was until the attack, in charge of Ijaiye Garage and one of the leaders of Kuto Garage. Their attackers were said to have stormed the garage about 4.a.m. while they were still sleeping and caught unaware.

It was learnt that enraged members of their group, however, gathered for a reprisal attack and initially prevented the police from removing the corpses of the victims.

They immediately mobilised and allegedly went to the homes of those suspected to have launched the attack while activities in all the garages in the ancient town were immediately disrupted.

People then deserted the streets in the Kuto, Sapon, Itoku, Asero, Adatan and Ita-Oshin areas as some members of the NURTW combed the streets in search of people believed to have launched the attack.

The State Police Commissioner, Mr. Olusegun Solomon confirmed the incident but said that he saw only one corpse, adding that no arrest has been made. He said "we have moved to forestall the crisis across the state. The crisis is a man made problem. It is an intra union problem".

There has been unhealthy rivalry between the two popular factions, the Akeem Bodunrin alias Iyeru-led faction of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the current State Chairman of the Union, Alhaji Tajudeen Baruwa.

This year alone, no fewer than six people have been killed in the perennial leadership dispute which appears to have defied all efforts by both the state government and all security agencies in the state.

Only last week, the leadership of the Ogun State House of Assembly led by its Speaker, Mr. Samson Tunji Egbetokun tried to reconcile the warring factions and ordered status quo within the union be maintained until all issues have been resolved.

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Ogun Transport Union Clash

Written by Moses Oluwatusin, on 30-07-2008 12:00, IP: 64.56.230.68

Any time I have the opportunity to read Nigerian news, it is always disheartening to learn the unnecessary wanton disruption of precious lives and properties.

As a democratic nation, isn't it a good time now for our legislators to sit down and do something about this lawlessness?

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To my personal views, NURTW should be outlawed, because to my reckoning, it is about the only union in Nigeria that has an unprecedented record of killings, internal wranglings, rioting and maiming innocent souls.

Thess types of news becomes scary to those of us (Nigerians In Diaspora) to establish a business and/or settlements in Nigeria.

Moses Oluwatusin
Toronto Canada



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