

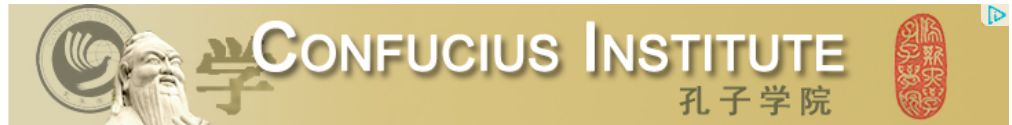
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Lagos wades into bloody NURTW fracas

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By Albert Akpor, Evelyn Usman, Bose Adebayo & Ifeanyi Okolie

LAGOS — The lingering crisis between factions of National Union of Road Transport Workers, [NURTW](#), Lagos State, which has caused the death of no fewer than [seven](#) persons, is taking a turn for the worse.

This time, the enraged members of the warring parties have continued to terrorise other members of the union. In fact, the fracas has spread to many parts of the state, leading to attacks on innocent people, unsuspecting motorists and passers-by.

So far, many have been injured while

property worth millions of naira have been lost and looted.

Principal actors suspended

Following this development, the national body of the union has suspended the principal actors in the ongoing violence in Lagos. They are Rafiu Olohunwa and Musliu Oluomo.

Loyalists to the principal actors have been at loggerheads over ownership of some motor parks in Lagos, a development that threw residents of Iyana-Ipaja and Adeniji Adele areas of Lagos into panic.

Although teams of Mobile and conventional policemen were able to quell the situation on Monday, the warring factions reportedly engaged themselves in a fight, which left two persons dead, yesterday.



Protesting NURTW members in Lagos.

At 3.30pm, yesterday, the lifeless body of a suspected member of one of the factions, identified simply as Tunde, was still lying at Adeniji Adele junction.

Eyewitnesses told *Vanguard* that one of the deceased, identified as Demola Akintunde, was hit by stray bullets during the feud at about 5 a.m.

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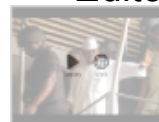


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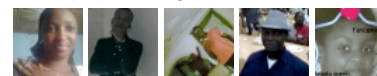


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The deceased, who resides at Ojuolokun Street, was reportedly coming from the mosque when tragedy struck.

When *Vanguard* visited the area, many shops were still locked with owners on the alert. Vehicles also avoided the troubled zone. There was also low turn out in both primary and secondary schools around the area, as pupils and students remained indoors.

It was against this backdrop that the union's national body reportedly summoned the principal actors to Abuja, yesterday, where they were suspended.

A source at the meeting, said to have taken over three hours, told *Vanguard* that the suspension was aimed at bringing a lasting solution to the ongoing feud.

Warning

It was also gathered that the national body had warned that whoever fought on behalf of either of the suspended factional leaders was on his own as they would be handed over to the police for prosecution.

Genesis of crisis

However, investigations showed that the crisis, which is linked to the forthcoming state chairmanship election of the union, may be far from over. It was gathered that a top notch of the union, who is said to be a candidate contesting for the post and had planned to emerge as the winner unopposed, might have been behind some violent clashes ravaging parts of the state.

The fracas started in major parts of the state after last Thursday's pronouncement by the National President of the NURTW, Alhaji Nasiru Yasiu, after a closed-door meeting with five contestants at the union's Abule-Egba office, that the state election would hold since the contestants could not present a consensus candidate.

The pronouncement was soon greeted with controversy, as supporters of the candidate who failed to emerge unopposed, started spoiling for war. It took the intervention of armed policemen, who arrested over six persons, including a candidate for the post of deputy chairman with two double barrel guns, to restore calm in the area.

The controversy also spiraled to Lagos Island, where Alhaji Ola-Shehu Ekeniojuoti, was shot dead in Obalende by gunmen suspected to be supporters of the unfavored chairmanship candidate.

Areas affected

Areas affected during the crisis includes, the union's secretariat at Super Bus Stop, two other motor parks in Abule-Egba area, Obalende, Orile-Iganmu, Lawanson and Lagos Island.

Unfortunately, the crisis at the Lagos Island has taken a more violent dimension since it broke out Sunday night leading to the destruction of more than 30 vehicles, while several persons sustained injuries as warring hoodlums engaged themselves in a free-for-all.

Banks and commercial activities were

grounded completely for the better part of Monday and yesterday. Banks at the Adeniji Adele area in Lagos Island, where the clash started after a group of hoodlums said to be loyal to an embattled contestants who failed to emerge unopposed, attacked a motor park at Olabanji Junction to take over the park from its controller.

The attempt was greeted with stiff resistance from operators of the park, which is a unit under Kakawa Branch of the state union. Dangerous weapons, including guns, matches and broken bottles were used freely by both factions.

Victims' accounts

Motorists heading into Adeniji-Adele from Third Mainland bridge were not only harassed but many of their vehicles were destroyed. A commercial bus operator, Olajide Ayedun, whose vehicle was badly damaged told *Vanguard* that it took the intervention of policemen to restore normalcy. He called on the state governor to intervene in the crisis and prevent it from escalating.

Ayedun said: "The situation was terrible. It was like a war. I was forced to flee the scene when they unleashed mayhem in the area and started destroying vehicles. It was as if my vehicle and others along the road offended them. They attacked this park around 6 a.m, when I arrived for work.

"Operators of the park repelled their attack and violence ensued before the police arrived and calmed the situation. But from the look of things, the fight is far from over

because all the parties are still ready for war.

Also the state government needs to step into the crisis and prevent further loss of lives and property.”

An official of the Kakawa Branch of the union in Lagos State, Babatunde Alade, alleged that a former state Chairman of the union (names withheld) was behind the crisis raging in the state union.

The official said: “He is the face behind the crisis rocking the state at the moment and if he is not stopped, the crisis will get out of hand. He had plans to emerge as the union chairman unopposed but currently there are many others vying for the same office. In fact, the state is divided into two with supports from different factions. That is why he doesn’t want an election where he could test his popularity with members of the union.

“He has been busy with his supporters going about fomenting trouble everywhere. The election is due in two weeks time but they are obviously impatient. They are practically trying to root out all the people opposed to them.

“After the meeting at Iyana-Ipaja, his supporters in the Island attacked and killed one of our own, Alhaji Ola-Shehu Ekeniojuoti, at Ebute-Ero. When we learnt of it, we took his corpse to the state police command in Ikeja and showed it to the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of operations, Tunde Shobulo. He addressed us and asked us not to take the laws into

our hands and that we should take the corpse for burial which we did quietly.”

“But few days later, the leader of the other faction sent his supporters after us again and they came to take over our park. They came at night on Sunday, destroyed several vehicles unchallenged and the equally returned on Monday. That was when the situation went out of hand.”

Responding to yesterday’s bloody clashes, the former state chairman of NURTW, Olohunwa, denied the allegation that his supporters were the masterminds. Speaking through his second personal assistant, Mumuni, Olohunwa claimed that many of his supporters were injured by supporters of his opponents who were hauling stones and missiles at him.

He said: “After the meeting, Alhaji Olohunwa came outside the secretariat. Supporters of the other contestants were shouting *O/e, o/e*, (thief, thief) and they were throwing stones and missiles at him at the Abule-Egba Secretariat. In order to protect him, Olohunwa’s supporters formed a human shield around him to enable him get out of the troubled area in one piece.” Olohunwa’s PA said the police are in a better position to know who fired the shot that killed Ola- Shehu because they were on the ground and they prevented people from moving near the NURTW state secretariat.

Contacted, the union’s Deputy Secretary, Lagos Council, Mr. Paul Ogini, confirmed the invitation of the actors to Abuja, claiming

however, to be unaware of a reprisal attack yesterday morning.

Although eyewitnesses put the number of those who lost their lives in the fracas at 10, Lagos State Police Command maintained that only two persons died.

Spokesman for the command, Mr. Joseph Jaiyeoba when contacted, said four persons have so far been arrested, informing that policemen had condoned off the entire area.

Meanwhile, following the spread of violence by the warring factions, Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Yakubu Alkali has directed the Deputy Commissioner of Police in-charge of operations in the state, Tunde Sobulo to relocate to Lagos Island and flush out anybody perpetrating violence in the area and restore peace and normalcy. Based on this, battle-ready policemen have been posted to strategic areas in the Island, while armoured personnel carriers, APCs, have been patrolling the zones.

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Francis510

I was born in Lagos 60 yrs ago. I lived in both mainland and Island. I want people to check all those names and you will see that

they are muslim names. Its always like that although I am a muslim and well trained and discipline by my parents. Most of them were not well trained by their parents, when one person having 6 to 7 wives and not able to train the children and this is the result. Some muslims still believed that they can have many wives as they want because is written in their Quran. Nonsense.

4 days ago 2 Likes

Like Reply



alhaj

The NURTW has been a problem that government has not found solution to, The former Lagos chairman Alhaji Saula was killed before Olorunwa took over and Musiliu Oluomo held sway in Oshodi and its environs. There was a documentary on Musiliu Oluomo by BBC which shows how much money and influence he has. Musiliu led a protest to Alausa the BBC reporter was shocked when he was told that Fashola will address these aggrieved youths and alas, Fashola came out to address them. I have to call other Nigerians that were Yorubas to watch the programme here in Europe. Please readers don't bother yourselves about this story because these 2 people in particular are the people that helped to install the past and present government in Lagos so also other chairmen do same in other states. Have you forgotten Toky and Elewemo in Oyo state? Elewemo was killed in PDP senatorial election in Dec 2010.

4 days ago 1 Like

Like Reply



OdesolaAyodeleSolomon

Madness everywhere in my country. In the north (Boko Haram) while in the west (NURTW). If you look so deeply, you will realize that both groups have something in common.

For a clue, look at the names mentioned
and u will know what i mean...
Save our souls oh Lord, for we pray to thee..

4 days ago 1 Like

Like Reply



OEO

Yes, the NURTW killers in the West
belong to the religion of BH in the
North. The religion of Peace indeed!

4 days ago

Like Reply

in reply to

OdesolaAyodeleSolomon

3 Likes



Change_0007

NONSENSE

4 days ago

Like Reply



Tobiju Ajibola

why is this going on....i will simply say it is
because of the money this touts makes daily
and we know that people in the high places
in the government too benefits that is why
they are so bold to cause problems.....the
best thing for Fashola is to scrap the union
in lagos....if they should keep on harassing
and causing kiosk in the city we the youths
will turn it to something else.....imagine
graduates that pays so much money in
schools to be a better person in the society
is not secured in life and once you are in the
union{Agbero} you will surely be rich ...that
is why they do not mind to destroy and kill
themselves to control the money the
make.....wait and see when educated
youths and students will show the beast
they buried in them.....enough is enough
our parents properties are being vandalized,
shops looted...and so many atrocities in the
name of transport union palaver....most
violent activities in lagos is all in the name of

transport unions....do something to stop this now before it turns to another thing

5 days ago 1 Like

Like Reply



Tobiju Ajibola

Just let Fashola and the people that allows all this tout to be on the street...if anything should happen to innocent people because of their greed and money extortion [we call it illegal taxation of the masses by the so called union....my old mother as well as other older women were attacked and almost robbed if not for the intervention of a military manhmmmn there is nothing that will not happen in Lagos if anything should happen to my aged mother,,,,for her love i will die and a lot will surely die too.....agbero, union, omonile or what ever will face the wrath of of true love....we no what violence is and we shall show it.....no one will be sparedlisten to the words of reasoning.....there is no security for a normal person in lagos.....when the hoodlums and touts have back ups in high places....police will do thier own too.....you must no that it is time.....be warned.....we are eager as youths to take things as we want no.....most of the youths cannot pay for school fees in higher institutions.....the will take to violence willing ..that is what they want isn't it.....

5 days ago

Like Reply



engr_show

There is nothing of such like National Union Road Transport Workers. It has been agbero and will always be agbero. Shame on our government.

5 days ago

Like Reply



Henry Ayeni

Its only in Nigeria that all kinds of unions

spring up to terrorize innocent people both physically and economically.

This monster called RATAWU or NURTW came into limelight during NPN's brigandage. They were used by NPN as thugs during electioneering campaigns. The same happened between 1999 and now where they are being used by the politicians.

It is certain that the Govt have lost control of this monster because, the Govt both at Federal and State levels don't want to be seen as biting the fingers that have fed them, A situation where touts just wake up to increase commuter fares and it is binding on all and sundry is not only sad but proves that Govt and the people have lost the battle to tame these hoodlums

5 days ago 1 Like

Like Reply



Yawe1

Honestly speaking i do not want to comment but i think i need to let people know the inept of Jonathan Govt, people should not get me wrong that even if hubby can not perform his right at home must all be blame on Jonathan, it's not so but let us flash back during late Tunde Idiagbon thou there are state administrators but himself Idiagbon eradicate this miscreant and agbero boys then i could recall Popson, Atila and co they were shoot down and they make sure they did not carry out this operation they were frustrated to death, listen people do say Tinubu allow them but some people are mumu, this miscreant and agbero known in a packaging as NURTW are nothing but a mere touts it's has to be dissolve from the federal level before talking about the state level when the foundation is broken the rest will fall, Jonathan visit them and they visited him before and after the election just same some state govs did but i wonder if this man call Jonathan and some state govs are

fools, moron and not expose, how could they have allow this touts collecting fees for what and this dirty guys are using the money to buy murano, camry, nissan and so on for dirty actress and some advance local babes its all poverty, those days can we tell our parents that we are dating a touts, agbero or a miscreant if they will not disown such person but now a graduate is even dating them all because of poverty, Jonathan and some govs do visit canada, america and europe, have they ever see such agbero in there parks and bus stop, i don't know why this our leaders are fools, the money those guys are spending anyhow is a taxes suppose to be paid to the local govt monthly and this money are to support the state govt in constructions of roads in the street, the money to buy murano is enough to tied one street and construct the drainage like that till all the streets are tied but our leaders are such a bunch of idiots and fools, DISSOLVE THIS MISCREANT CALL NURTW AND ALLOW THOSE FEES GOES TO LOCAL GOVT ACCOUNT TO ENABLE THEM REPAIR ROADS, Thanks.

5 days ago 4 Likes

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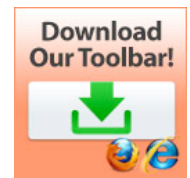
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