

# Endsars Protest: The Need for the Nigerian Government to Tweak Its Security Architecture

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**Abstract:** *EndSARS is a social action prompted by the Nigerian police force's continued brutality against suspects, especially a unit within the Nigerian police force known as the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). This study evaluated Endsars Protest: The Need for the Nigerian Government to Tweak Its Security Architecture. The study made use of data from secondary sources, including books, personal sources, journals, newspapers, websites, blogs, and official records, among others, while structural functionalism theory guided the study. Analysis of the data showed that police officers, particularly SARS officers, abate and support the use of violence, torture, and extortion on their suspects, and that the government has failed to equip and train them professionally. Based on the following finding, the researchers recommended that both the government and its citizens put their heads together to check the excesses of the police without actually creating unnecessary tension. Adequate financial resources should be made available for the operation of the force. There is a need for a complete social reorientation and the establishment of clear procedures for punishing negligent officers.*

**Keywords:** Special Anti- Robbery Squad (SARS), Police Brutalities, Youth, Nigeria Police Force, EndSARS Protest.

## Introduction

SARS is an acronym representing the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, a unit in the Nigerian police force specifically created in 1992 and then headed by retired CP Midenda, commissioned to fight armed robbery and other serious crimes (Nnadozie, 2017). Prior to that, the Nigerian Police Force in general was in charge of combating robberies, although beginning in 1984, anti-robbery squads functioned separately as parts of various states' criminal investigation departments. The squad was created with the good intention of quenching the high rate of criminality across Nigeria. SARS was only active in Lagos for ten years, but by 2002 it had extended to Abuja and all 36 states that make up the federation. Its duties included the detention, investigation, and criminal prosecution of suspects in armed robberies, murders, kidnappings, hired assassinations, and other violent crimes. The squad's primary objective of conducting covert operations was discarded as a result of its increased confidence, and instead it began to create barricades and extort money from passersby. While still donning their regular uniforms, officers started carrying firearms in public. Then, based solely on the possession of a laptop or smartphone, SARS officials reportedly started to target and oppress young men for "cybercrime or being online scammers" and demanded outrageously high bail costs in order to release them.

In a climate where political unrest and insecurity are rife, no growth can occur. According to Onime (2018), insecurity can limit economic growth by depleting investment, raising unemployment, decreasing export revenues, and decreasing government revenue. Similarly, laws and strategies to combat insecurity in Nigeria must target the populace by eradicating or drastically reducing the massive death toll in areas of violent activity; target oil production, exports, and oil revenue by eradicating pipeline vandalism activities, oil bunkering, and militancy conflicts in the Niger-Delta of Nigeria; target unemployment by fostering a peaceful and conducive environment for businesses to actually function in; and target all of the mentioned. Every government, anywhere in the world, yearns to ensure a peaceful atmosphere, an environment devoid of tension and criminality.

A 30-man Consular Guard was the progenitor of the Nigeria Police Force, which was founded in 1861. The guard was subsequently increased to 600 men in 1891, and the name was changed to Hausa Police. The Lagos Police Force was created on January 1st, 1896. There were 1,200 officers and men in the Lagos Police Force when it was founded in 1896. Police forces were initially regionalized during the colonial era before becoming nationalized. They were nationalized and incorporated into the Nigerian state in the 1960s, during the First Republic. They were nationalized during the First Republic's 1960s administration and incorporated into the Nigerian state. It is expressly stated in Section 214 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) that Nigeria shall have a police force. However, the force is governed by the Police Act. The Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, and the 36 states of the Federation each have officers and members of the Force assigned there. (Nigeria Police Force, 2022).

EndSARS Protests across the country, on the other hand, were the result of well-organized, coordinated agitations by youths who felt that the government needed to address the ongoing human rights violations by a police unit known to have extrajudicially

tortured, maimed, and killed innocent and accused young Nigerians (Chow, 2020). According to Amnesty International (2020), SARS officials are alleged to have regularly detained young Nigerians illegally and extorted money from their relatives. Amnesty International records at least 82 instances of torture, cruel treatment, and extrajudicial killings carried out by SARS between January 2017 and May 2020 in a new study titled "Time to End Impunity." Males between the ages of 18 and 35, from poor families, and members of disadvantaged groups make up the majority of the victims of the police unit created to combat the "wedge war" against crimes and criminalities. Notwithstanding the 2017 Anti-Torture Act, Amnesty International's analysis uncovers a worrisome pattern of mistreatment of suspects in SARS custody. Amnesty International frequently saw wounds, marks, and traces of blood on the bodies of victims. Numerous people endured whippings with clubs and cutlasses and were deprived access to health care (Amnesty International, 2020).

## **Conceptualization**

### **Youth:**

In life, "youth" refers to a person's early years. The term "youth" can also refer to one's peak of health or the stage of life described as being "young adult," as well as the period of development that occurs between childhood and adulthood. Youth can be regarded as the stage of life during which one is young. This includes childhood and the stage of life that lies somewhere between childhood and adulthood. Every person between the ages of 15 and 24 is referred to as a "youth" by the United Nations (2013). Although this definition is not universally applicable to member nations, it does apply to people of a young age. The best way to understand youth is as a time of transition from childhood's dependence to adulthood's independence. They also argued that age is the most straightforward way to describe this group, particularly in regards to education and employment, as "youth" is usually used to refer to individuals between the ages of leaving compulsory education and obtaining their first job.

UNESCO (2022) said that young people are the key factor in its activities and, as such, take center stage in its policy decisions and programmes. They genuinely think that young people are essential agents, leaders, and collaborators because of their inventiveness, creativity, and ability to affect change in the world. According to the 2019 National Youth Policy, which revised the 2009 definition of youth, a "youth" in Nigeria is defined as a person between the ages of 18 and 29. This highlights why the National Youth Service Corps is only open to recent graduates under the age of 30 (Edokwe, 2020).

## **Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS)**

A division of the Nigerian Police Force known as the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was formed in late 1992 to handle crimes involving robberies, motor vehicle theft, kidnappings, livestock rustling, and guns. SARS is one of the 14 units that make up the Nigeria Police Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (Ogbette, Idam, and Kareem, 2018). This unit was created to find, look into, and prosecute persons responsible for violent crimes such as robberies, murders, hostage-taking, hired assassinations, and other types of extreme criminality

## **Police Brutality**

Police brutality is the term given when law enforcement uses disproportionate or unjustifiable force against an individual or a group. It violates people's civil rights and represents a severe instance of police misconduct. Police brutality can take many different forms, such as beatings, shootings, poor knockdowns, and the unauthorized use of lethal force. The truth is that different populations have quite different views on police violence. Scholars explain how the public might categorize all police activities as being harsh, including verbal demands and threats, but emphasize that physical force is a required element of brutality.

Carl (2022) presented an argument that clarified the positions of intellectuals and police forces in identifying the difference between necessary and unnecessary force, excessive force, and brutality. According to Carl (2022), "necessary force" refers to the force required to make an arrest or otherwise carry out a police officer's official duties. Unnecessary force refers to the use of force when it may not be necessary or using more force than is necessary. It is typically viewed as "a training problem, the result of incompetence or insensitivity." The use of more force than necessary combines with brutality, which is a deliberate and callous act by personnel who typically go to great lengths to hide their wrongdoing.

Police brutality, according to Amnesty International (2022), is a term occasionally used to describe a number of different human rights abuses by police. This could involve unjustified executions, torture, or the unrestricted deployment of riot control measures during protests. One or more of the following may be used as torture techniques: Torture techniques used frequently in detention in Nigeria and around the world include punching, beating with rods and sticks, electric shocks, water treatment, hanging from ceilings while being beaten, using ice blocks to shatter bones, and applying pepper to the eyes.

## **ENDSARS Protest**

The initial goal of the EndSARS demonstrations was to demand an end to the widespread extrajudicial executions and police brutality in Nigeria. The driving force behind the well-organized, coordinated agitations that led to the EndSARS protests that took place across the country was young people who felt that the government needed to act quickly to stop ongoing violations of human rights by a police unit that is known to have extrajudicially tortured, killed, and injured young Nigerians who were innocent or accused (Chow, 2020).

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### Group Picture of Protesters in Lekki Tollgate, Lagos state



Source: Vanguardngr, 2021

The protest's name was inspired by the hashtag #EndSARS, which was used in a 2017 Twitter campaign to demand that the Nigerian government abolish the unit. New information about the unit's atrocities became public after a resurgence of massive protests in Nigeria's major cities in October 2020, which were accompanied by riotous rage on social media (Ozulumba, 2021). In several major cities throughout the world, supporters and diaspora Nigerians participated in solidarity rallies and demonstrations. A composition of only young Nigerians who support the protests makes them remarkable. In contrast, the Nigerian Police Force said on October 11, 2020, that it was abolishing the unit with immediate effect; just a few days after protests began. Many people hailed the action as a victory for the protests. The government simply intended to reorganize and assign SARS officers to medical centers rather than entirely abolish the unit, it was highlighted in numerous places that identical pronouncements have in fact been made in the past to placate the population without the unit actually being abolished. Rallies have continued as a result, and the Nigerian government has continued its ruthless repression policy, which includes killing demonstrators.

### Records of Young People Who Held Political Positions in Nigeria

Nigeria's youth, like that of many other African countries, lags far behind in local, national, and international politics. They have over the years assumed the status of second-class citizens and preferred to "work" for the older politicians. According to Ibezim (2019), unemployment and poverty are the root causes of this situation. He claimed that youth poverty and unemployment had put them in the hands of wealthy and older politicians, who used them as mobilizers or political foot soldiers to incite violence, manipulate elections, and intimidate opposing parties. These older politicians, therefore, see them as surrogates instead of partners in the field of developing the country. This implies that, rather than competitors, youths are merely political mercenaries to the older generation.

Youth participation in politics in Nigeria is dated as far back as the era of colonial administration, when young Nigerian students of the likes of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, H. O. Davies, Tafawa Balewa, Samuel Akintola, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Chief Anthony Enahoro, and other young activists championed Nigerian independence. They were very young, articulate, and politically

vibrant. Few among them took part in the establishment of political parties like the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), the Nigerian Youth Movement, and the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), among others. According to Afolayan (2018), Anthony Enahoro was merely twenty-one years old when he moved for self-determination, while General Yakubu Gowon was twenty-nine years old when he became the Nigerian head of state until he was removed through a coup d'état.

However, the youths of this modern generation prefer to serve as aides, assistants, and foot soldiers to the older politicians instead of competing for political positions (Ajodo-Adebanjoko, 2019). This, according to Ajodo-Adebanjoko (2019), had resulted in the recycling of old generations of politicians from the first and second republics. Worse still, there are no youth in the cabinets formed by President Muhammadu Buhari in 2015 or 2019, respectively.

### **Empirical Review**

Onime (2018) investigated the impact of insecurity on Nigeria's economic growth. The paper examined its impact on a few economic metrics using aspects of descriptive qualitative analysis and secondary data. The investigation revealed that, among other things, increased unemployment and declining tax collection are only a few ways that insecurity stunts economic progress. As a result, this study advised increasing capital spending on internal security. It also discussed various policies that should be created and aimed at resolving the economic repercussions of insecurity.

A study on "Protest Policing Strategy and Human Rights: A Study of EndSARS Protests in Nigeria" was conducted in 2022 by Etim, Duke, Fatile, and Akah. To address the research issues, the researchers in this study employed a descriptive mixed-methods research methodology. They found, among other things, that the Nigerian Police Force lacks a working public complaint procedure where members of society can voice their complaints about the actions of force members. The End SARS protest also disproved the conventional wisdom that using overwhelming force would force demonstrators to obey orders from the government. Findings indicate that the degeneration of protests would be caused by the police's treatment of peaceful gatherings as if they were riots and by their failure to stop a violent growth at an early stage. The study provides guidelines for how to plan a peaceful and orderly protest if a demonstration is required.

Ochi & Mark (2021) looked at how the EndSars protest affected the Nigerian economy. Given the scope of the work, the study adopted structural-functionalist theory and employed the survey research method. So, a qualitative research method was used. The secondary sources from which the data were derived were journal publications, news pieces, and other web sources. However, an examination of the literature demonstrates that SARS is infamous for its violence, violations of human rights, and lack of accountability for its acts, while the protest caused the Nigerian economy to incur significant losses amounting to billions of naira. Police officers have considerable discretionary powers under the 1943-adopted Police Act, which makes abuse of power probable. The analysis comes to the conclusion that the EndSars protest has had an impact on the world's perception of police brutality in Nigeria as well as the Nigerian people and economy. The researchers recommend that individual states should create networks of interaction with the general public and give heed to the vast numbers of people who are calling for police reform, as well as substantial improvements in how the police communicate with towns and cities and investments from the federal and state governments in employment creation to create long-term economic opportunities for young people.

Odili & Egobueze (2021) conducted research on strategic management and decision-making in Nigeria, with a focus on the #ENDSARS protest. The study assessed how strategic management affected the decisions that the State and the protesters made regarding the conflict. It did this by utilizing secondary data, content analysis, and human resource-based theory as its theoretical framework and methods of data collection and analysis. It suggested, among other things, that the state should give the army of unemployed youngsters jobs and enhance the welfare and working conditions of the Nigeria Police. The study found that neither side used good strategic management to manage the conflict, and it advised that decision-makers should be transformational and strategic in their choices.

A research paper by Nnubia (2022) with the title "Massive Human rights violations and Sustainability of Democracy in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: A Study of Endsars Protests 2020". The study employed Karl Marx's social conflict theory as its theoretical framework after reviewing important linked literature. Primary and secondary data as well as a combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques were used in this investigation. Descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages, and chi-square were used to examine quantitative data gathered through the administration of questionnaires. The research put forth two hypotheses and discovered that, in Nigeria, democratic governance has not succeeded in promoting and safeguarding individual rights. Second, the inadequacy of democratic rule to protect human rights foretells disaster for Nigeria's democratic viability.

The researcher proposed that the federal government adopt a policy of enlisting officers of the Nigerian security apparatus both domestically and internationally in order to make them active and competent in upholding law and order in the community. Every barrier or impediment to educational, economic, and cultural growth should be removed, and the government should inform and teach both adults and children about the value of democratic governance and respect for human rights. For democratic administration and the respect of human rights to be guaranteed, there must be sufficient political will. The subject of human rights should also be one that government officials are aware of, sensitive to, and proactive in addressing, because knowledge can essentially guarantee citizen-oriented policies. Having respect for human dignity is another quality they ought to possess.

According to Aliyu (2012), who did a research on Nigeria's security issues, the country is currently being held captive by a number of negative forces that are working together to give it a failed status. The study demonstrates how the present level of unrest

is a symptom of a deep-seated and structurally entrenched development dilemma that fosters the creation of poverty, unemployment, and inequality in the nation. These ultimately result in societal unrest, which in turn breeds violence and instability. They also cause frustration and isolation. These circumstances could not have developed into significant national security issues that threaten to split the nation apart without the enabling environment. The study's findings demonstrate that, despite the fact that Nigeria may seem to be failing, the patterns that have led to this state of affairs are reversible if the government and the rest of the world took significantly aggressive and consistent action. This suggests that it is up to governments to halt this decrease through social justice and economic development. Therefore, addressing Nigeria's security issue also means addressing its development dilemma.

Akinsowon (2021) carried out a study on the root causes and solutions of security challenges in Nigeria. Uncertainty that has manifested itself in various ways, such as Boko Haram, Fulani herdsmen, armed banditry, and kidnapping, is causing additional anxiety in the lives of ordinary people. Hunger, infrastructure, unemployment, and other vices that are too numerous to describe all contribute to this. Crime, which used to be decided by people because it violates both natural and divine laws, is the main source of security issues. The results demonstrate that political security, freedom from tyranny, and other forms of arbitrary government have an impact on economic and social security, freedom from want and deprivation, cultural security, freedom from racial and religious dominance, environmental security, freedom from environmental destruction, and resource security, which in turn have an impact on the economic consequences and effects of the Fulani herdsmen and farmers crisis on Nigerian national development.

The researcher suggested that the federal government work with experts in peacekeeping and conflict resolution to address problems involving Fulani herdsmen and farmer crises and that ranching practices for raising cattle be used in various locations across the nation while the herdsmen receive the necessary training for managing the ranch effectively and efficiently.

### **Theoretical Foundation: Structural Functionalism**

The theory of structural functionalism is an explanatory theory that was principally formulated by Talcott Parsons and Emile Durkheim. Other scholars, such as Radcliffe Brown, Kingsley Davis, and Wilbert Moore, debated the theory further (Ishiyama & Breuning, 2010). According to the theory, the interactions among the many social institutions that make up society are what determine how it functions. According to the structural-functionalist perspective on society, the entire social system is interrelated and responsible for preserving stability and firmness in society. Any kind of sudden change or divergence could prevent it from operating normally.

When this approach was applied to the subject of the investigation, the EndSars protest, it had consequences for the entire police force as well as Nigerians and the economy. The Nigerian Police Force was established primarily to serve the needs of the populace, but due to its abrupt departure from the fundamental principles of policing and flagrant misconduct, days-long protests broke out across the federation, causing severe damage to the country's economy, peace, and stability, and worsening the security situation.

### **Research Method**

To interpret the information gathered for this study, descriptive qualitative analysis was used. Utilizing both recent and old data to find patterns and connections is known as "descriptive analytics." It describes trends and associations but does not delve deeper, earning it the designation "the simplest type of data analysis." The study made use of data from secondary sources, including books, personal sources, journals, newspapers, websites, blogs, and official records (National Bureau of Statistics), among others. Secondary data sources are now easier to access thanks to the development of electronic media and the internet.

### **Summary of Findings**

#### **An Overview of Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) Brutality and the End-SARS Protest**

The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was established because of the government's sincere desire to address or reduce the high-insecurity problems that it faced in the 1990s. The special squad was created with the intention of having a good impact, but it quickly devolved into a murder squad, with grave violations of human rights and the release of criminals in exchange for bribes. Chow (2020) identified the British colonial reign in Nigeria as the origin of the aggressive nature of the government and its security organizations, especially SARS. The country and its inhabitants were viewed as resources by British conquerors, who arrived in the 19th century and also raided and exploited them. Because of the culture of brutality and corruption that their colonial enterprise had left behind, military coups in Nigeria persisted even after they attained independence in 1960. From the early 1990s until 1999, when SARS, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, was established, the army ruled Nigeria for the majority of that time. An even more brutal version of this culture of violence was adopted by the infamous SARS. Consequently, a strategy of SARS holding people in detention and tormenting them into confessing began to develop. Young men who were merely walking the streets were stopped, frisked, and stripped of their phones to check the contents. SARS agents often demanded bribes, and individuals who refused to pay were beaten and degraded in front of others. Women, including the elderly, were not immune to the horror of SARS, which took the form of beatings and torture (Chow, 2020). It is obvious that, despite the fact that their actions are very much against Nigerian law, SARS has been given discretion in how they choose to handle inmates and has gotten support from the authorities and the legal system. Under the direction of senior police personnel, the most heinous aspects of the breaches were committed (Amnesty International).

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Amnesty International documented 82 instances of torture, cruel treatment, and extrajudicial executions by SARS between January 2017 and May 2020 in a study on the organization's abuses from 2017 to 2020. Males between the ages of 18 and 35, from poor families, and members of vulnerable groups make up the majority of the victims of the police unit created to combat violent crimes. According to a similar report, Nigeria registered 164 extrajudicial deaths between January and September 2021, despite EndSARS protests nationwide against police brutality in 2020 (Gboyega, 2021).

Detainees held by SARS have specifically been subjected to a variety of forms of torture, such as sexual abuse, mock executions, hanging, beating, punching, and kicking, as well as waterboarding, burning cigarettes, near-asphyxiation with plastic bags, forcing detainees into uncomfortable positions, and sexual violence. SARS officers have used opportunities to extort money, property, and other valuables from suspects and their families while doing their job to safeguard Nigerians across the country. Young people between the ages of 17 and 30 are the most vulnerable to being detained, subjected to torture, or the target of extortion by SARS. They are frequently charged with being armed robbers or internet fraudsters. SARS typically targets young guys with dreadlocks, ripped jeans, tattoos, showy cars, or costly devices.

EndSARS protests started out as a cry to stop extrajudicial executions and the excessive use of force, which have become prevalent in Nigeria. Police brutality and harassment are rampant, and they have been since the days of the military, when troops had the power to imprison people without cause and infringe their civil rights (Ozulumba, 2021). The report further states that a 27-year-old Nnamdi Azikiwe University student studying law at the 500-level was fatally shot by police on May 4, 2020, inside a bar. On May 21, a youngster, the only son of his parents, died tragically at the hands of the police in a similar situation. He was on his way back home from work when he was pursued by police from the Nimo unit until he was struck by a moving vehicle. Reports said that he died as a result of his injuries.

Similarly, on May 26, 2020, Tina Ezekwe was killed by a police officer who fired to disperse a mob that had formed after he fired at a bus driver. The incident that led to a flurry of social media movements for justice left the teen dead two days later. Also, a 20-year-old motorcycle rider was shot and murdered by a police officer in Adamawa on June 2, 2020, because he refused to pay a N100 bribe.

On July 9, 2020, a police officer shot and killed a 27-year-old man in Imo for failing to wear his face mask. Equally, on October 3, 2020, a police officer opened fire on customers of an Abuja beer parlor, killing Samson John, and a young woman was shot in the mouth by a police officer in Lagos on October 8, 2020, as she demonstrated against SARS and police brutality (Ozulumba, 2021). The widespread #EndSARS protests that took place in October 2020 were the result of these incidents and other instances of police brutality in the country. Even though the government replaced the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) with Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) in every state of the federation, police brutality in Nigeria has not been curbed by this move alone.

LIST OF CASUALTIES OF THE LEKKI INCIDENT OF 20TH OCTOBER, 2020

S/N	NAMES OF VICTIMS	STATUS	GENDER	LOCATION
1	VICTOR SUNDAY IBANGA	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
2	ABUTA SOLOMON	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
3	JIDE	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
4	NICHOLAS OKPE	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
5	UKALA PATRICK AYIDE	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
6	OLALEKAN FALEYE	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
7	MABEL NNAJI	GUNSHOT INJURY	FEMALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
8	JOSHUA SAMUEL	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
9	LUCKY PHILEMON	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
10	AJOKU JAPPHET	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
11	OPE KEHINDE	INJURY TO THE WRIST	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
12	CHARLES CHINEDU OZIOMA	ASSAULT BY MILITARY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
13	DAMILOLA ADEDAYO	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
14	ANDREW UGOCHUKWU	ASSAULT BY MILITARY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
15	IOITYOM SAMUEL	ASSAULT BY MILITARY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
16	ISAAC AMEDE	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
17	FELIX NANDIP	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
18	EMMANUEL JOHN	ASSAULT	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
19	SIMON ABU RAYMOND	INJURY FROM ASSAULT	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
20	MOSES ADAMS	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
21	SAVIOR OSIKE	ASSAULT BY MILITARY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
22	MOSES OYI	GUNSHOT GRAZE	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
23	YINUSA ADAMU	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
24	JOHN HARRISON	ASSAULT BY MILITARY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
25	SOLOMON SAMUEL AGIH	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
26	THEOPHILUS DAVID	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
27	AWWEROGUO TRUST	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
28	OLAMIDE DAUDA	STAMPEDE INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
29	SAMUEL ASHOLA	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
30	ASUE ROLAND THOMAS	ASSAULT	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
31	EMMANUEL OGBONNA	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
32	JOSHUA JAMES	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
33	PAUL FEMI	GUNSHOT GRAZE	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
34	OLALEKAN SANUSI	SEVERE ASSAULT BY MILITARY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
35	OLALEKAN ABIDEEN ASHAFI	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
36	OLAMILEKAN AJASA	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
37	KOLADE SALAMI	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
38	FOLORUNSHO OLARISI	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
39	KENECHUKWU UGOH	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
40	ABIODUN ADESANYA	MISSING PRESUMED DEAD	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
41	IFEANYI NICHOLAS EJI	MISSING PRESUMED DEAD	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
42	TOLA	MISSING PRESUMED DEAD	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
43	WISDOM	MISSING PRESUMED DEAD	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
44	IFEANYI AGBEZE	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
45	NNATAH STANLEY CHIMEZIE	GUNSHOT INJURY	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
46	NATHANIEL SOLOMON	DECEASED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
47	AYODEJI BECKLEY	INJURED	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE
48	ONILEOWO LEGEND	SEVERE ASSAULT BY POLICE	MALE	LEKKI TOLL GATE

Source: Vanguardngr, 2021

The list of victims from the endSARS protest at the Lekki tollgate in Lagos state is shown in the table above. The victims were identified by the judicial panel of investigation that Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos state set up.

### Conclusion

Everyone, including the government, security services, and individuals, is responsible for ensuring the safety of people and their property. Security is a vital matter, and any responsible government must take all necessary precautions to shield its inhabitants from criminals. The government must hire, educate, and outfit police officers at all levels to make their work simple and professional in line with the rest of the world. On their part, citizens are required to pay their taxes on time so that the government may take care of both their personal and professional requirements. Citizens are equally expected to report any possible breach of security protocol or suspected criminal activity to the local police station.

We were able to prove that police officers, particularly SARS officers, abate and support the use of violence, torture, and extortion on their suspects. They most often fabricate charges against young boys in order to extort money from them, and in some cases, the suspects never came back alive. Because the government was unwilling to train and retrain police officers (SARS) on best practices, the operative was transformed into a killer squad for politicians or privileged members of society. After many years of

appeals from concerned citizens for the government to either dissolve or reform SARS, the endSARS protest in 2020 would not have taken place if President Muhammadu Buhari's administration had overhauled the security architecture.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the aforementioned concerns, the following recommendations were made:

1. Policing the police: The Nigerian Police Force is made up of Nigerian citizens. They are the product of the Nigerian system and can only be made better by the same system that formed it. Both the government and its citizens must put their heads together to check the excesses of the police without actually creating unnecessary tension.
2. Security of lives and property is the duty of all and should be considered paramount by the government and its institutions. Adequate financial resources should be made available for the operation of the force.
3. There is a need for a complete social reorientation, or what the late Professor Dora Akunyili, the former minister of information and communication, referred to as "the rebranding of Nigeria." The general public has to be taught the values of entrepreneurship, especially the jobless and impoverished Nigerian youth (Nwokike, Chidolue & Okonkwo, 2022).
4. In Nigeria, police officers in the top, middle, and lower ranks all engaged in horrible behaviours. This is a threat to public peace, stability, and the security of lives. The police should establish clear procedures for punishing negligent officers, ensure that the public can see that these procedures are being followed, and provide victims with reachable reporting channels.
5. The researchers finally recommended that the police should treat offenders in accordance with established rules and regulations and uphold the laws and traditions of policing.

### **Preferences**

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