Twitter Thread by Great Oracle



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'Stay at home' for #LekkiMassacre protest is not a sign of weakness. The likes of Odanz -or is it Odense? - have called attention to this and they are not pacifists. They are strategist-realists.
Activism is the art of war. Pounce when the enemy is at its weakest [Thread]

As a young activist in 1991 and NANS President, I knew activism was and still the art of war; and also knew that in war you pounce when your enemy is at its weakest.

What I didn't realize is the strength of the "pouncer"

NANS Senate - the highest organ of NANS- met in Ilorin in March 1991 and issued 13 points 30-day ultimatum to IBB, chief of which was to scrap the political transition programme, resign and handover to the Government of National Unity.

As NANS Chief I was saddled with the duty of moving around Nigeria mobilizing for a showdown with the junta beginning from 1 May 1991. Negotiations between NANS and FGN led by Prof Babs Fafunwa and Alex Akinyele broke down before the expiration of ultimatum on 30 April 1991

At the joint press conference addressed by Fafunwa and Akinyele on 27 April 1991, Akinyele threatened that "students leaders will be picked like snails" and asked parents to advise their wards. Traditional rulers joined in the blackmail.

30 April 1991, five national student leaders including yours sincerely were declared wanted by the federal government. That day, Yabatech moved. LASU followed next day. Across Nigeria, the Big 8 moved: UNN, Ife, Ibadan, Benin, Calabar, PH, ABU, Jos moved 1 May 1991

Then, the massive military, police and SSS onslaughts began. 2 students were killed in Yabatech. DELSU broke out from Abraka and seized Radio Warri. Nigerians were killed on the streets by soldiers. Over 20 students leaders were arrested, including the central leaders of NANS

Mass expulsions of student leaders began across campuses. NANS leadership was in prison - Kirikiri and Ikoyi Prisons - and the students movement was in disarray.

Peace activists like Papa Chris of Unilag took over!

One lesson we learned too late was that we underestimated the strength of our enemy and overestimated our strengths. The truth we glossed over was this: NANS was at its weakest in 1991, having just recovered two months earlier from internal factionalization;

and having fought the military in 1986, 1988, and 1989, the Association had weakened internally from each fight. We were overzealous as youths and wanted to taste battles on the streets.

But, we learned in 1993 after many of the generation had become battlers for democracy

When IBB annuled June 12 polls and the army resolved to kill peaceful protesters on the streets, we ensured that Stay at home became the star strategy of the Campaign for Democracy (CD): stay at home and hold on to your streets.

The enforcers of the stay at home were the very thugs the government would have used against us, particularly in Lagos.

We worked with them because we sufficiently educated them.

And our campaigns were successful.

Stay safe, folks.

Morning comes.

Good afternoon from the sanctum sanctorum of the shrine.