Protests rock Lagos, Abuja over rising rape cases, sexual assault against women

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Protests rock Lagos, Abuja over rising rape cases, sexual assault against women  
  
By Alao Abiodun  
  
Group of protesters on Friday stormed the Nigeria Police Force Headquarters in Abuja, and police command in Lagos to protest the rising spate of rape, sexual violence, assault against women, incest in the country.  
  
Unanimously, they demanded that there should be declaration of state-of-emergency on gender-based violence in the country.  
  
The protesters who demanded justice for the rape and killing of Miss Vera Uwaila Omozuwa, Miss Bello Barakat and other victims in the country, called on the police and other security agencies to devise effective strategies to checkmate the rising cases of sexual assault in Nigeria.  
  
The protest which was organised by TechHerNG, Girl Child Africa, Connected Development, EiE Nigeria, Stand To End Rape, SilverChipFox, Yiaga Africa, Dorothy Njemanze Foundation, and Education as a Vaccine, urged authorities in Nigeria to force systemic action against Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) in Nigeria.  
  
In statement released by the organisers, it explained a that a memo will be forwarded to the Nigerian Governors’ Forum and the Federal Executive Council calling for an effective and sustained institutional response to SGBV in Nigeria.  
  
Some of their key demands listed in the statement were: “Domestication of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act and Child Rights Act in all states of the federation; Establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARC) in every state, backed with a coordinated, sustainably-funded support system;  
  
“Criminalisation and prompt state-led prosecution of SGBV cases within, regardless of requests or interference by the victim’s family or interested parties; Implementation of functional Family Support Units and Force Gender Units at the state level that are well equipped to address SGBV cases; The imposition of public disciplinary measures against officials of the NPF and state prosecutors that mishandle cases of SGBV.