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Mayhem rages in Ikorodu...

THURSDAY, 22 AUGUST 2013 00:00 BY ODITA SUNDAY AND SEYE
OLUMIDE NEWS - METRO



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• Four policemen arrested, one person feared dead in renewed protest over killing of commercial motorcyclist

ONE person was feared dead again and several others injured as commercial motor-cycle operators popularly called Okada continued their protest Wednesday over the killing of one of their members by policemen attached to the Rapid Response Squad (RRS) on Tuesday.



As early as 7:00 am, hundreds of commercial motorcycle operators besieged Ikorodu Police Station with the aim of burning the station in retaliation for their felled colleague. They were armed with various dangerous weapons like cutlasses, catapults, sticks, broken bottles and some were even alleged to be carrying locally made guns and chanting different war songs.

For several hours commercial activities was held to a standstill while hoodlums took advantage of the situation to harass innocent pedestrians and traders who were thrown into confusion as they were running to dodge spray bullets or encounter hoodlums.

Describing the situation, a staff in one of the commercial banks along the road said: "It has been long since I witnessed a protest of this nature where angry commercial bike operators became defiant and confronted armed policemen and soldiers. I wonder where this country is heading towards if citizens could be so courageous to confront armed security agents?"

As the pandemonium continued, the commercial bike operators became bolder, telling the fierce-looking armed police officers "how many more are you going to kill? You are going beyond the scope of the law to arrest us even inside the streets. What alternative has Governor Babatunde Fashola provided that he ordered police to be taking our instrument of daily survival?"

With these and some other defiant statements, hundreds of thousands of youths, commuters and traders who have had issues with officers of Kick Against Indiscipline (KAI) and Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) seized the opportunity to vent their anger against the government.

According to a driver, Taju: "If we do not face this once and for all, we would continue to live under this tyranny. There is the need for us to survive."

Meanwhile, one of the lead protesters simply identified as Kazeem, has been arrested for allegedly leading protesters who attempted to set ablaze the Shagamu Road Police Station in Ikorodu.

However, police authority have confirmed that four members of the RRS team that shot the commercial bike rider dead have been arrested while one of the policemen is in a critical condition at a government hospital following the injuries he sustained from the beating he received from the motorcycle riders.

The Guardian gathered that at about 7.30 am some commercial motorcycle operators who were protesting the death of their colleague stormed the Shagamu Road Police Station in an attempt to burn down the station but they were resisted by the police who fired into the air to scare the protesters away and in an attempt to escape many people were injured during the stampede.

It was gathered that the leader of the team, one Kazeem, who was not deterred by the Police shooting

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proceeded to the station and was overpowered by the policemen who arrested him.

An eyewitness Diebele Ojigo said the motorcycle riders were angered by the arrest of Kazeem and, therefore, took to the streets. Hoodlums were said to have hijacked the protest.

Ojigo said the hoodlums confronted another police patrol team on Ikorodu roundabout and started throwing stones at the officers and men in the vehicle. One of the policemen, however, shot at one of them who died on the spot.

A police source said the man who was killed was an alleged member of an opposition group who were fighting over an undisclosed argument.

When contacted, the Lagos State Police spokesperson, Ngozi Braide said one person was killed and one other arrested in connection with Tuesday's protest over the killing of one of the commercial motorcyclists by RRS men.

Braide said the police was investigating the matter with a view to ascertain what transpired and who killed the man.

She said the police team that shot an Okada operator has been spotted out.

"Four of them are in Police custody while one of them who was attacked by okada men is being treated at a hospital," she said.

According to her: "We want to know who fired and why he fired and justice must be done."

She appealed to the family of the deceased to be calm and wait for the police investigation to be concluded.

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