



'How Okada man killed my friend'

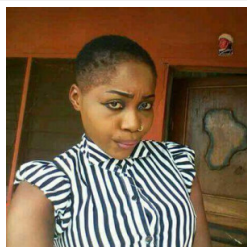
Posted By: MOHAMMED YABAGI on: March 24, 2016 In: Campus Life No Comments



•A crowd of the polytechnic students being addressed by the Rector

Students of Kogi State Polytechnic (KOGI POLY) went on the rampage last Tuesday, following the killing of a National Diploma (ND) II student, Hariat Jibrin, by a commercial motorcyclist (aka Okada rider) in front of her hostel. MOHAMMED YABAGI (Mass Communication, Kogi State University) reports.

•Poly student relives colleague's death



The late Hariat

THE murder of a Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja student, Hariat Jibrin, 22, by a commercial motorcyclist (*aka Okada rider*) in front of her off-campus hostel, has sparked a huge protest.

The *Okada* rider and the National Diploma Two (NDII) student were engaged in an argument over N20, but the motorcyclist was said to have brought out a knife and stabbed the student. The assailant whose name could not be ascertained at press time attempted to flee but was caught by passers-by.

The incident happened few minutes past 9pm at Adankolo Lodge in Lokoja, which is about three kilometres from the campus. The students' protest last Tuesday led to the school's closure. The protesters converged on the school gate, from where they moved to Okene-Lokoja Highway, destroying vehicles.

The late Hariat's friend, Hassana Ozivehu, relived how it happened. In an emotion-laden voice, she said: "Hariat and I arrived from school together, but we rode on different motorcycles. I had paid the *Okada* man who picked me from school. I observed Hariat was arguing with the *Okada* who brought her home. She demanded for N20 balance, but the *Okada* man said he would only give her N10.

"The fare from the campus gate to Adankolo is usually N80. Hariat gave the *Okada* man N100 and expected to get N20 balance. The *Okada* man, instead, gave her N10 and said he was only doing her a favour, because the fare was supposed to be N100. Hariat told him it was N80 and that led to an argument.

"Such argument is common between students and *Okada* riders. I did not take it seriously as I started moving away from them. Suddenly, I heard them raising their voices. By the time I turned around, I saw the *Okada* man holding Hariat's neck tightly. Before people could move close to them, the man brought out a knife and stabbed her."

Students almost lynched the *Okada* rider on the spot before he was rescued by passers-by, who

informed the police about the matter. The victim was rushed to the Federal Medical Centre (FMC) in Lokoja, where she died.

Hassana described the late Hariat as a “good friend”, saying she never expected her friend would be killed “like that”.

The angry protesters gathered at the school gate, seeking revenge. About three kilometres away from the school gate, commercial motorcyclists and tricyclists scampered for safety as the crowd of students built up.

Riot policemen moved to the scene to keep the peace. Despite the presence of security operatives, some of the students screamed: “Bring the *Okada* man make we kill am”. Others shouted: “*We no go gree, we no be goat wey anybody go kill anyhow*”.

Attempts by the riot policemen to placate the students failed. The students moved to neighbouring communities to destroy wares and properties said to belong to some commercial motorcyclists. They stopped cement-laden trucks belonging to Dangote Group. The truck drivers, sensing trouble, fled for safety. The trucks were set ablaze by the protesters.

To restore order, a platoon of soldiers was drafted to the scene to join the police to stop the rampaging students.

Some of the commercial motorcyclists, who spoke to our correspondent, defended their colleagues’ action, saying he may have acted in self defence. They accused students of attacking *Okada* riders and dispossessing them of valuables.

A motorcyclist, who gave his name as Aminu, said there had been attacks on commercial motorcycle operators in Lokoja in recent times, adding that some were perpetrated by students.



He said: “Some of the students, who are cult members, have attacked and dispossessed our members of money and phones at gunpoint. They would lure *Okada* riders to dark spots at night, where other accomplices would be waiting. They normally use girls to carry out the robbery. The *Okada* man, who stabbed the student, goes about with a knife for self-defence.”

The Rector, Dr Isah Mohammed, said the management would ensure that justice is done. He urged the protesters to return to their hostels peacefully.

Mohammed said: “We are sad by the unfortunate incident. I received the news of the death of a student killed by a commercial motorcycle operator, because of argument over N20. It is a rude shock to us, because we are yet to recover from the death of the school registrar.

“As we have observed, this said incident did not go down well with everyone, especially the students. But, we don’t want a breakdown of law and order. This is why we decided to invite the law enforcement agents to prevent any further breakdown of order around the polytechnic community.

“This is not a case of accident, but that of one human being taking the life of another for no just cause. The law will take its cause and we expect students not to take law into their hands.”

Lilian Ojochenemi, a student, said there had been attacks on students by commercial motorcyclists and traders around the school, calling on the government to “stem the tide of the ugly incidents”. According to her, the students have had enough of the attack. She said: “It is Hariat this time, who knows whose turn it may be tomorrow?”

Students complained that the inavailability of buses to aid their movement to and from campus exposes them to danger. “What does it take management and government to provide dedicated bus service for students? There should be a transport scheme for students living in Zango and Ganaja to reduce hardship and prevent danger like what happened to Hariat,” a student said.

Other students called for security measures that would safeguard the lives of those living off-campus.

The Police Public Relations Officer, William Aya, confirmed that the suspect is in custody.

Aya advised students to desist from taking the law into their hands. He said the suspect would be charged to court after investigation.

Ad Here: x
Ad Here: x
Ad Here: x
Ad Here: x

