

Gunmen kill tricycle operator in Abia community

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Residents of Federal Housing Estate and the adjoining Emelogu Road at Ogbor Hill axis of Aba in Abia State are mourning.

Four unidentified gunmen have reportedly shot a commercial tricycle operator dead in the area.

The identity of the hoodlums could not be established last night.

It was learnt that the gunmen accosted the tricycle operator, who was identified simply as Kalu and said to be an indigene of Abiriba in Ohafia Local Government Area.

The hoodlums were said to have asked for the keys to the tricycle, which sources suspected was to be used to commit a crime.

The commercial tricycle operator, who reportedly resided at nearby Emelogu Road, was said to have refused to part with the keys.

This was said to have forced the hoodlums to shoot him.

The victim reportedly died instantly due to the close range of the shot.

The hoodlums were said to have stolen the tricycle, leaving the operator in the pool of his blood.

A source hinted that the commercial tricycle operator was heading towards Ngwa Road from Ogbor Hill when the hoodlums accosted him near the Orji Uzor Kalu Bridge.

The source said: "It was when they demanded for his *Keke*'s key that he knew they were armed robbers. The *Keke* operator resisted them and the hoodlums shot him severally. He died instantly.

“From what we gathered, the hoodlums usually parked their car in a nearby bush, came out on the road and snatched a tricycle from its owner and beat security operatives on the road.

“When they succeed in attacking or kidnapping their target, they either snatch another *Keke* to run or abandon the *Keke* elsewhere to escape into the bush.

“Some people are in jail today because the police traced their *Keke* to have been used in robbery operations without knowing that the owners did not have any hand in the kidnapping or robbery.

“Some *Keke* owners are lucky to find their tricycles were abandoned in a nearby bush by the hoodlums before heading off with their victim.

“It is unfortunate that the innocent young man failed victim of these heartless individuals.”

Police spokesman Geoffrey Ogbonna, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), could not be reached last night for his reaction.

But a senior police officer, who pleaded anonymity, confirmed the killing.

He added that the police were on the trail of the hoodlums.