

# Two feared dead as cyclists clash with thugs in Lagos

By Precious Igbonwelundu

**T**WO persons were yesterday feared killed and several others injured after a clash between commercial motorcyclists and tax collectors.

Vehicles and other properties were said to have been damaged in the violence that lasted several hours and saw the factions setting bonfires, shooting bottles across the roads.

The Nation gathered that trouble started this morning following the increased levies charged the cyclists by union tax collectors.

Already, the motorcyclists were said to have been uncomfortable by what they termed illegal daily taxation from area boys, security operatives in spite of increase in price of petrol and other expenses they incur.

Monday's attack was said to have grounded human and vehicular movements from Iyaba Iba up to Alaba Rago and Barracks on one end, while the crisis also extended beyond Okokomaiko on the other side.

Residents who were going about their daily businesses were caught up in the exchange of bottles, gunshots and other violent tactics by the warring factions with some returning to their homes for fear of being injured.

It was gathered that the violence almost degenerated into an ethnic clash but for the intervention of security operatives quelled the unrest.

Reacting to the incident, spokesman for the command, Olumuyiwa Adejobi, said the situation was brought under control, adding that additional deployments have been made in the area to maintain the peace.

"The Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, CP Hakeem Odumosu, has ordered for immediate deployment of additional police personnel to the area to maintain law and order. He also directed the Area Commander, Area E Festac, to personally be on ground to monitor the situation and invite the leaders of the affected Okada riders unit for an urgent meeting.

"The command wishes to debunk the rumor that the disagreement, not violence as being peddled in the social media, was between some ethnic groups. Without mincing words, the incident has no ethnic colouration whatsoever but a mere conflict between transport unions and their okada units on ticketing and increment in tariff."