

# Motorcyclist feared killed during protest against union fee

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*Oju-Ore area; ticket*

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A yet-to-be identified commercial motorcyclist (*okada* rider), is feared killed after a protest against increment of ticket fee by the Articulate Motorcycle Owners and Riders Association, AMORAN, Ogun State chapter, turned bloody.

It was learnt that the riders mobilised to Oju-Ore, Sango Ota, on Monday, decrying the hike of the ticket fee from N750 to N1,050.

It was gathered that some hoodlums, allegedly working for the union executive, attacked the protesters, leading to a free-for-all.

One of the riders was allegedly stabbed in the neck and was said to have died in a hospital. Another member of the union, identified as Kudus, was also injured.

It was learnt that policemen from the Sango division later restored

peace to the area around 11am.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that the union worked in conjunction with the state government and the Ado/Odo Ota Local Government Area, covering motorcycle parks in Oju-Ore, Lafenwa and Ilogbo, among others.

A sum of N320 is written on the two tickets issued by the union at the rate of N1,050, an *okada* rider, who identified himself as Chinedu Silvester, said.

Silvester stated that his major discontent was the union's failure to use the money for projects that could make parks better in the area.

He added that several persons were wounded in the clash.

He said, "We were paying N750 per day, but it has now been increased to N1,050. That was what led to the protest. The union thugs, who issue the tickets, are violent and we don't know what the money is being used for. A lot of people were wounded and I leant one person died, but I don't know his name because the riders in Sango Ota are about 1,000. All of us pay the ticket fee everyday and what they give to the local government is N20 per rider while the state government gets N300.

"I am not against the fee if they will use the money to maintain the parks. Some of the parks around here are too dirty which is not supposed to be. We want the government to intervene."

Another rider, who declined to give his name, said the hoodlums were led by one *Dangbure*.

"One of us was stabbed in the neck and was rushed to a hospital, but I was later told he died there. In the two tickets, N300 and N20 are written on them, but we pay N750 which they have now increased to

N1,050. The police will come here, arrest us and take our motorcycles to the station. We pay N5,000 before it is released. The union members do not defend us. The Ogun State Traffic Compliance and Enforcement officials come to harass us unnecessarily. The union does nothing," he said.

An elder in the community, who did not want his name in print for fear of being attacked, said the union connived with the police to oppress the riders. He said some members of the union had built houses from the money they collected from the riders.

He said, "The union executive use policemen to oppress the riders. They make millions of naira from the *okada* riders; N750 is too much, let alone N1,050. They make more money than the riders. An *okada* rider told me about the clash and he said one of them was killed."

The state Secretary, AMORAN, Akindele Adedayo, said there was a clash between the union executive and the motorcyclists. He, however, said the increment had not been enforced, adding that nobody died in the fracas.

He said, "There was a little conflict between the union and the *okada* riders and we have already settled it. The allegation that we are selling our tickets at N1,000 plus is a lie. We are collecting N750 from them.

"We are still trying our best to reduce the fee if we can. Those riders actually injured one of the union officials; none of them was injured and we arrested the particular person that did it. The security agents are in charge now."

The Ogun State Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Muyiwa Adejobi, said peace had been restored to the area.

He said, "There was a clash between the union executive

and *okada* riders, but nobody was killed. The police from the Sango division were mobilised to the scene and normalcy has been restored.”