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Six feared killed as okada clash in Lagos

Deji Lambo

CONTROVERSY is trailing the casualty figure in Monday's clash involving okada riders and Road Transport Employers' Association of Nigeria members in the Iyana Iba area of Lagos State.

While a transport worker told PUNCH Metro that no fewer than six people lost their lives to the clash, a marshal insisted that four persons were killed in front of the Lagos State University, and toward the Alaba Rago area, close to Iyana Iba.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the clash started when the union members allegedly accosted a yet-to-be-identified Hausa motorcyclist and demanded his ticket.

The request reportedly led to an argument between the union members and the motorcyclist, which degenerated into a fight.

It was learnt that the union members allegedly injured the motorcyclist during the scuffle.

Angered by the development,



• Scenes of the clash

other Hausa motorcyclists regrouped and allegedly attacked the union members in retaliation.

The reprisal, however, escalated into a free-for-all that affected vehicular movement in Iyana Iba and Okokomaiko, among other nearby routes along the Lagos-Badagry Expressway.

In a bid to escape, commuters,

passers-by, traders and customers were said to have run helter-skelter.

Speaking to PUNCH Metro, a campus marshal, who did not want his name mentioned, said the union members and motorcyclists freely used weapons, including guns, cutlasses, sticks and stones, adding that four persons were killed.

He said, "The clash was between

the transport union members and Hausa okada riders; they were fighting over daily tickets and it started around 10am. They started fighting around Iyana Iba and it spread to the front of the LASU gate and we heard gunshots. When the Hausa okada riders got to the front of LASU, they started harassing anyone passing and killed four

We'll probe final year student's death - LAUTECH

Wale Oyewale, Ibadan

THE management of the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, Oyo State, has expressed its resolve to investigate the death of a final year student of

the institution, Bernard Asefon, who passed away last week.

The acting Vice-Chancellor of the institution, Prof. Mojeed Liasu, gave the assurance while addressing the leaders of the National Association of Nigerian Students in

the South-West Zone, led by its Deputy Coordinator, Oladimeji Uthman.

Liasu, who described the death as unfortunate, said the management felt terribly pained by the incident and was committed to getting to the root of the matter

in a bid to guard against future occurrences.

The acting VC urged the students' leaders to educate their members on responsible unionism and discourage them from destroying public property at the slightest provocation.

On the resuscitation of student unionism in the institution, Liasu said steps were being taken on the proposition.

riders, transport union members

persons. The most painful part was that soldiers and OP MESA operatives saw the Hausa okada riders using cutlasses to cut someone and they refused to intervene till the person was killed. I witnessed it live; another person would have been killed, but the security guards at LASU rescued the person and took him to the health centre on the campus.

"The second person, who was killed, was attacked with sticks and cutlasses till he died in front of the university. My friends, who live in Alaba Rago, told me that two other persons were killed in their area. Most people killed were Igbo and Yoruba.

"The okada riders were attacking people in large numbers and after killing them, they took their bodies away with their wheelbarrows. It was when the RRS officials came that things became calm a little bit."

A transport worker, Bode Adenibigbe, said the clash caused gridlock on the Lagos-Badagry Expressway, adding that six persons allegedly lost their lives.

He said, "How the clash

happened was that some of the Hausa motorcyclists, who didn't have their tickets, were apprehended by the union members and in the process, a fight broke out between them and one of the motorcyclists was injured.

"So, the colleagues of the injured Hausa motorcyclists regrouped and started attacking the union members. About six persons were killed as the Hausa motorcyclists turned it into a tribal clash between them and Yoruba boys."

Meanwhile, footage trending online showed soldiers driving away from the front gate of LASU as the Hausa motorcyclists hurled stones at the students and security guards, who were preventing an attack on the institution.

The okada riders were also seen vandalising vehicles parked at the front gate of the institution. The impact of the attack on the security guards forced them to close the gate.

The recorder said in the footage, "See what they are doing, soldiers are there and they allowed the hoodlums to destroy everything in LASU. All the motors in LASU

have been destroyed. Please close the gate.

The Nigerian military is here and they allowed them to destroy all these cars. They are destroying motors in front of LASU."

Reacting to the development, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejebi, refuted the claim that some people were killed, adding that the clash had no ethnic coloration.

Adejebi said, "The Lagos State Police Command has restored normalcy to the Iyana Iba, Alaba Rago and Ojo areas of the state where there was a disagreement between members of the transport union and the okada unit on the increment in tariff today (Monday), April 26, 2021.

The state Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu, has ordered the immediate deployment of additional police personnel in the area to maintain law and order as he also directed the Area Commander, Area 'E', Festac, to personally be on the ground to monitor the situation and invite the leaders of the affected union and okada riders' unit for an urgent meeting.

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

Adejebi enjoined members of the public, especially those around

the area, including LASU students, to go about their lawful business and studies, adding that adequate personnel had been deployed to fortify security in the area and by extension in Lagos State in general.

Police swoop on three Delta kidnappers collecting ransom, rescue victim

Matthew Ochei and Gbenga Odugun

THE Delta State Police Command has arrested three kidnappers at the point of collecting ransom and rescued the victim in Nisamwan Epe in the Uruhe Local Government Area of the state.

The acting Police Public Relations Officer in the state, DSP Bright Edele, stated this on Monday.

He stated, "A complaint was received by DPO, 'A' Division, Warri, on April 23 that one Peter Okikoko, 26, was kidnapped.

"It was gathered that 26-year-old Ehin John of Ogboni community in Warri led a group of armed men, some of who were alleged to be in military uniforms and armed with guns and other weapons.



• Two of the suspects

"They stormed the house and whisked away Peter Okikoko after firing gunshots and took him to an unknown destination.

"On the strength of the report, the DPO, 'A' Division, Warri, mobilised the rapid response team from the division and swung into action immediately and arrested another



two suspects led the police team to Sagala where one David May, 30, was arrested at the kidnappers' den.

Edele added that May had already demanded the sum of N1m and was arrested as he came out to collect the ransom, while the victim was released. He noted that one of the kidnappers, simply identified as Austin, escaped

Abducted Ondo construction workers, Ekiti LG official,

workers, Ekiti LG official,