Police kill okada rider in Lagos, seize 60 motorcycles

Afeez Hanafi and Olamide Francis 8 May 2021

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There was commotion at Ogba bus stop, Lagos, on Friday following the alleged killing of a commercial motorcycle rider simply named as Ibrahim by policemen from the Pen Cinema Division.

Two other riders, one of who was identified as Aminu, were also said to have sustained gunshot wounds and rushed to nearby hospitals.

City Round learnt that a police team from Pen Cinema raided Ogba around 10pm on Thursday to arrest motorcyclists (popularly known as *okada* riders) operating on highways prohibited by the government.

Aminu reportedly resisted when the policemen wanted to impound his bike, prompting one of them to shoot him in the thigh before they went with the motorcycle.

It was gathered that his co-riders protested against the act at the Pen Cinema Police Station but the policemen repelled them with gunshots during which bullets hit Ibrahim and another protester. Ibrahim reportedly died that night.

On Friday morning, a horde of riders reportedly stormed the Area G Command controlling Pen Cinema Division to register their grievance. As the atmosphere became charged, policemen shot into the air to disperse the crowd.

When our correspondents visited the scene around 10am, passersby were seen running to safety while many shops were temporarily shut.

A police van used by the Rapid Response Squad was stationed close to the Area Command while vehicular movement inwards neighbouring Aguda was diverted.

A phone accessory seller, John Ikechuwku, told *City Round* that he was about to display his wares when the commotion began.

He said, "I learnt that policemen from Pen Cinema shot a Hausa *okada* rider last night because he didn't want to let go of his bike. His friends took him to a hospital but they were told to get a police report. They went to Pen Cinema but the police didn't attend to them.

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"They were protesting when policemen shot into the air and bullets hit two of them (riders). One of them died shortly after. Those *okada* riders live in Oke-Ira (a nearby community); they only come here for passengers."

One of our correspondents who visited the base of the riders on Abo-Aba and Bintu streets, Oke-Ira, saw a crowd of aggrieved motorcyclists

A rider, Abdul Usman, said after the shooting, policemen raided their domain in vans and seized over 60 motorcycles.

He said, "One of the three persons they (police) shot died. His name is Ibrahim. The other two are in hospitals battling for their lives. They also came here to pack more than 60 motorcycles. The boy (Aminu) was riding a motorcycle around 8pm not 10pm as claimed."

One Salisu Ahmed said some *okada* riders were also arrested during the raid.

Spokesperson for the police in the state, CSP Muyiwa Adejobi, could not be reached on the phone and had yet to reply to a text message sent to him on the incident as of press time. However, normalcy had returned to the area in the afternoon.

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