

Abuja motorcyclists, security agents clash over riders' mysterious deaths

• Two okada riders killed in three days, motorcycles stolen

Olalekan Adetayo and Solomon Odeniyi

CRISIS erupted on Sunday in Kanu, one of the satellite towns of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, when some commercial motorcyclists clashed with security operatives.

The security operatives were said to have been drafted to the scene to restore normalcy when the motorcyclists, who were protesting what they called the mysterious



• FCT Minister, Mohammed Bello

death of two of their colleagues, went on the rampage and started vandalising vehicles and attacking passers-by.

The protesters were said to have resorted to stoning the security operatives.

This was after they had blocked the Nyanya-Karshi Road, off the Abuja-Keffi Expressway, leaving motorists stranded.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the motorcyclists were protesting the alleged killing of two of their colleagues.

Sources said while one was killed on Friday with his motorcycle stolen, the same fate befell another on Sunday morning, therefore causing the unrest.

One of the sources said, "One commercial motorcyclist was killed this (Sunday) morning. His corpse was dumped beside a refuse bin near a church and a cemetery. His motorcycle was stolen."

"The same thing happened to another rider on Friday morning. His corpse was also dumped in the same area."

"So, young guys in the area and commercial motorcyclists were angry and decided to stage the protest. That was what caused the mayhem."

The protesters were said to have burnt used tyres on the main road.

The development caused panic among residents and passers-by, who ran to safety.

Churches located in the area were said to have locked their members inside the premises to prevent them from falling victims.

Mostly affected were residents of Karu, Nyanya, Jikwoyi, Kurudu, Orozo and Karshi, among other settlements in the Abuja Municipal Area Council.

While the uproar lasted, residents resorted to sharing messages on social media to warn people to keep off the affected areas.

The Police Public Relations Officer, FCT Command, Mariam Yusuf, confirmed the protest in a telephone interview with **PUNCH Metro**.

Yusuf, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, however, said normalcy had been restored in the areas.

She stated, "It was not a clash. It was a protest by motorcyclists due to the death killing of their colleagues by unknown assailants."

"However, normalcy has been restored and the command is investigating the incidents."

There was tension in Abuja throughout last week following reports of alleged imminent attacks on some government facilities and VIP locations in the FCT.

patronage

security challenges began, traders could travel to places like Yobe, Maiduguri and Kaduna to purchase commodities, but now, they are afraid of going to such places for fear of being kidnapped or killed.

The Chairman of the Karmo Market, Sylvanus Ogechukwu, also attributed the price hike to the rising insecurity in the country.

He stated that many farmers in the crisis-ridden areas were unable to go to farms to plant or harvest their crops and those who could increase the prices of their produce.

When asked if the government had made any provision to assist the traders in view of the current situation, Ogechukwu said no interventions had come from the government in recent times.

He advised the government to make efforts to stop abductions, conflicts and killings in the country, as this would help to improve trading conditions.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria's annual inflation climbed to more than a four-year high in March, rising by 82 basis points from a month earlier to 18.17 per cent, while in the same period, food prices rose by 22.95 per cent.

rain destroys



room, conveniences and visitor's room are submerged and my properties and documents destroyed," he lamented.

But the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Print Media, Modestus Nwamkpa, said the problem was not caused by the Uzodimma administration.

He stated that the administration inherited a very bad road network in the state, adding that the government was addressing the issue with the ongoing construction projects in the area.

"The flooding is not the making of this administration. We inherited a very bad road network from the past administration, but the governor is not relenting as he is currently carrying out massive road construction projects in Owerri," Nwamkpa said.