

# Anger as hoodlums rob, kill cyclist on Lagos road

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**L**agos residents commuting along the Shodex area in Anthony, Ikorodu Road have decried persistent robberies by hoodlums despite police checkpoints within the neighbourhood.

The commuters expressed worries over the violent attacks following the death of a cyclist, Afolabi Mabogunje, stabbed by robbers at the black spot recently.

There are about three checkpoints in the area. Policemen are usually stationed at the Town Planning Bus Stop along Ikorodu Road and under the bridge close to Shodex Gardens. Another team monitors the flyover at Anthony, linking Oshodi-Oworonshoki Expressway to the Shodex area.

However, our correspondent could not ascertain whether the cops were on the ground when the incident occurred.

City Round learnt that Mabogunje, well known as Mabogs, was waiting for his co-cyclists in the early hours of Thursday, September 9, when the assailants descended on him.

They reportedly stabbed him in the neck, dispossessed him of his mobile phone and fled the scene, leaving him for dead.

One of his friends, Abidemi Solaja, who posted about the bloody attack on Facebook on Thursday, said Mabogunje died from the injury days later.

Solaja wrote, "He was a passionate cyclist who loved exercising by riding bicycle alongside other friends. On Thursday, September 9, in the morning, he was mugged and stabbed in the neck by robbers just because they wanted his cell phone. It was after stabbing him they demanded the phone which he would have graciously given them if hitherto, they asked first."

"This incident occurred at Shodex, Anthony (the cycling club meeting point) while he was waiting for other cyclist friends. He struggled on his bike to Gbagada hospital for urgent medical attention but attempts to stop the bleeding were unsuccessful as the jugular veins on both sides of the neck had been ruptured."

Solaja explained that Mabogunje was immediately transferred to the intensive care unit of the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital for a surgery.

"After the surgery, he was initially stable but later slipped into a coma and never came out of it until he gave up the ghost. Afolabi was a rare gem and a complete gentleman; may his soul rest in perfect peace. Amen," he added.

A former classmate of the deceased, Adewale Adefuye, said he and a friend had planned to reach out to Mabogunje after learning that his phone had been stolen.

"What a senseless, unwarranted death! I cry not as one without hope—but the pains are heavy to bear; for the loved ones you left behind: your parents, wife, children, siblings, classmates, family and friends," he bemoaned.

A commuter, Muda Oyemade, said a lady was also murdered in the area sometime ago and called on the government to address the menace.

He said, "Anthony area is notorious for robbers. That's the same place a lady returning from work got stabbed and died. These guys are everywhere, may God save us on our everyday journey. The government should sit up and confront this menace while the locals too must try and speak out whenever they see something."

One Justine Echebiri lamented that the spot had become



## •Mabogunje

a haven for criminals day and night.

"This is so sad. Shodex, Anthony under bridge, is known for such robberies. It is a hideout for hoodlums especially in the early hours and late nights," he wrote.

"Those boys have been operating on that spot for ages and our security agencies can't do anything about it; so sad," another Lagosian, Ade Akintokun, said.

An Instagram user, Officialowengee, said it was unfortunate robberies thrived in the area despite the presence of security agents.

He stated, "Anthony under bridge has now become a den for armed robbers and it is more painful because beside the gardens there are always VIOs (vehicle inspection officers) searching and on the other side leading to Oshodi, there is a police checkpoint. But these security agents just constitute a nuisance to motorists and never wade-off the area boys who constantly stroll around the stop and search area; very sad."

Another commuter, with the moniker aofriq, said, "That zone is a dreaded area. The number of uniformed men doesn't deter them (the hoodlums). I have seen people running drenched in their blood on that axis, @lagosstategovt and @rrslagos767 should do something."

However, Shodex Gardens Manager, Olaoluwa Adekoya, told our correspondent on Friday that the attack on Mabogunje did not occur "around the facility," saying the cyclist was robbed about 300 metres away from the gardens.

He said, "We are aware of the incident but it didn't happen around Shodex. It happened at a BRT bus stop opposite Town Planning, about 300 metres from Shodex. That is the meeting point of cyclists. The hoodlums attacked him early in the morning and stabbed him in the neck."

"The area boys around our premises tried to help him but he was scared and ran for his life. The hoodlums who stabbed him usually come from Oshodi and Mushin areas. The area boys around here don't commit atrocities here because people know them."

"Our security in Shodex is tight. We light up the surroundings. Our customers have never complained of any attacks. However, we will beef up security and talk to the security agents in the state."

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, CSP Adekunle Ajisebutu, promised to get back to our correspondent with comments on the incident but had yet to do so as of press time.