

Task force men chase okada rider to death on Lagos highway

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AN unidentified commercial motorcyclist popularly known as *okada* rider has been reportedly crushed to death by a vehicle at Ikeja Along on Lagos-Abeokuta Expressway.

The ride was allegedly running away from officials of the Lagos State Environmental and Special

Offences Unit (task force), who raided the spot on Saturday morning when he met his death.

Sunday PUNCH learnt that the men stormed the area around 11am to enforce the ban of *okada* on the highway and other restricted routes in the state.

The deceased's co-riders were said to have gone on the rampage and made a bonfire on the road, creating gridlock on the busy expressway. It was gathered that it took a reinforcement of policemen from different formations to disperse the angry protesters. Normalcy had returned when our correspondent visited the scene around 1am.

An eyewitness, Samuel Akintunde, told *Sunday PUNCH* that a member of the task force team chased after the victim, caught up with him and pushed him off the motorcycle.

Akintunde said the rider fell on the road and was crushed by a speeding vehicle, adding that the team fled the scene afterwards.

The man said, "The taskforce

men came around 11am to seize motorcycles. The *okada* riders made frantic efforts to evade arrest and the officials chased after them. One of them caught up with the victim and they were both struggling with the motorcycle.

"He pushed the rider from the bike and he landed on the path of a speeding bus which hit him. He bled from the head and died on the spot. The officials left the spot immediately when they realised he was lifeless."

A traffic hawker, Daniel Chukwudi, said *okada* riders regrouped on the expressway to protest which led to gridlock. "They blocked a section of the road and made a bonfire. Police later reinforced and chased them away with gunshots. They (police) took the victim's corpse away," he added.

However, the Head, Public Affairs Unit of the taskforce, Femi Moliki, absolved the agency of any wrongdoing. He said, "I am not aware of the incident. Our men didn't go out for operations today (Saturday)."

Robbers torture, dispossess victim of property, money, phones

the Diamond (Access) account. I don't know how much they transferred."

Ogunbenro said the robbers dropped him off around the Oke-Odo area and zoomed off, leaving him in pain.

He added, "A motorcycle rider who saw me groaning with pain said I was the fourth person robbed and dumped at the spot. It was a tricycle rider who eventually took me to the hospital. The case was reported at the Oke-Odo Police Station.

"I was in a hurry that day. I didn't go to the office in my car because I was tired. That was not the first time I would board Sienna to the office. Many commuters going to Victoria Island always rush to board Sienna at the bus stop early in the morning."

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, CSP Adekunle Ajisebutu, could not be reached for comment on the incident.



•Ikeja Along

...crushed to death ... injuries ...