

Protest as Rivers task force beats tricyclist to death

9th June 2023



Rivers CP, Polycarp Emeka

By Dennis Naku

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There was pandemonium in the Ogbogoro area of the Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State on Thursday when a man attached to a task force allegedly punched a tricycle rider identified as Esikak Esieme to death following an argument over a N200 ticket.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the task force officials had stopped Esieme who was conveying a passenger and demanded the money, but the tricyclist explained that he had just started work for the day and did not have the amount they requested yet.

An argument was said to have ensued and in the process, one of the task force members identified simply as Osisi punched the 39-year-old tricyclist who slumped immediately.

Our correspondent gathered that some of the victim's colleagues immediately rushed him to the hospital where he was confirmed dead.

Irrked by the development, his colleagues staged a protest against what they described as the daily harassment and extortion they suffer from Osisi and his men.

The angry tricycle operators temporally shut down operations and marched from Ogbogoro to the complex of a radio station in Port Harcourt, demanding justice for their late colleague.

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The President of the Tricycle Union in Ogbogoro Community, Ivumba Friday, said, "Nsikak Esieme was murdered this morning by one Osisi that has been terrorising Ogbogoro and our people daily. We have been reporting this matter to OSPAC, even to the police."

The deceased's elder brother, Lucky, while narrating what transpired, first demanded the release of his late brother's corpse to the family.

When contacted, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Grace Iringe-Koko, confirmed the incident but said it was a case of two persons fighting each other.

“We are aware of the case but from what the Divisional Police Officer told me, it was a case of two fighting. He was beaten to a coma and was rushed to the hospital where he was confirmed dead.

“Efforts are on top gear to apprehend the suspect and make him face the law,” Iringe-Koko, a Superintendent of Police, said.