

# Okada riders raise alarm over members' killings

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Motorcyclists

By Abiodun Nejo

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The Chairman of Okada Riders Association in Ekiti State, Mr Kunle Asaolu, on Thursday raised alarm over the incessant killing of commercial motorbike operators in the state and stealing of their bikes.

Asaolu, who said the assailants killed the okada operators under the cloak of darkness in the early and late hours, cautioned his men against being tempted by attractive charges to take people to unknown places where they could be killed.

The okada riders' boss, who spoke at an emergency meeting in Ado Ekiti, the state capital, on Thursday, to brainstorm and sensitise the operators to riding to stay alive, said that new sites in various parts of the town were notorious places the riders should shun.

He said, "Twenty-three commercial motorcyclists were killed and their motorbikes taken away within the last three months and we are very sad about it.

"Efforts are in top gear to fish out the culprits while we have advised the commercial motorcyclists to abide by the security guidelines given by the police."

"We convened this meeting to let all of us know. Early in the morning, they will use bikes to go and rob and people will think it's the okada riders. We know ourselves. This meeting is to give Okada riders information.

We are so much concerned about them.

“At times, they use money to entice okada riders only to kill them and make away with their bikes. Do not go anywhere you do not know. Information gathered shows that most of the killings take place at the new sites where there will be nobody to rescue them. The killing is fast becoming a daily thing.”

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The okada riders' association official said the state government had warned okada riders to come out by 6 am and close by 10 pm, noting that the riders should abide by this to stay alive.

“When it's late and very early in the morning, do not carry passengers to unknown places. You should refuse to be lured to death with high charges,” he told okada operators.

A Chief Superintendent of Police, Victor Akinsanya, in his address to the commercial bike operators, warned them against working after the stipulated 10 pm.

Akinsanya, who said the killing of motorcycle riders in the state capital called for concern, said, “All hands must be on deck to fish out the perpetrators.”

The police officer, who urged the operators “to supply credible intelligence to security agencies to curb the menace,” charged them “to obey traffic rules, ensure registration of their motorcycles and desist from

taking passengers to unknown locations.”

The Commissioner of Police in Ekiti State, Mr Adeniran Akinwale, had in April alerted the public that the command received an intelligence report that some armed men were out to attack motorcyclists and dispossess them of their motorcycles, money and other valuables.

The police had then stated, “Reliable information available has it that this set of criminal elements will lure their intended victims to isolated locations at odd hours under the pretence of paying extra charges, attack them and cart away their motorcycles and other belongings.

“The command is deeply concerned and given this, implores members of the public especially motorcycle riders to, in their interest, shun riding at late hours of the day, avoid taking customers to isolated or strange locations, be cautious when conveying two or more passengers at a time to distant or isolated locations out of greed,” the police had warned.