

# Policeman, *okada* rider killed, others injured in Lagos bloody clash

By **Christopher Oji**

**A** policeman and a commercial motorcycle rider, popularly known as *okada* rider, were killed while many others sustained injuries in a bloody clash between policemen and *okada* riders along the Oshodi-Apapa Expressway, Lagos, yesterday.

The incident also crippled human and vehicular movement between the Rainbow area and Cele bus stop.

Daily Sun gathered that the deceased officer was among other policemen deployed to enforce the restriction order preventing *okada* riders from returning to major roads in Lagos State.

The state government had restricted the operations of *okada* riders in 10 local government areas. This was in line with the state government transport sector reform laws of 2018. It was further gathered that the officers were out to enforce the state government's ban on the operations of *okada* along the Oshodi-Apapa corridor when an argument broke out between the police and *okada* riders.

A witness, John Madueme, said the deceased officer was hacked down by the *okada* riders, who were armed with dangerous weapons to resist the seizure of their motorcycles and arrest of their members. Madueme said the situation got out of hand as a result of the killing of the officer. He said the officer had earlier left with some impounded motorcycles but met stiff resistance when he and his team returned to the scene to impound more mo-

torcycles.

"At a stage, it became a free for all as the riders struggled to free some of their bikes that were already in the custody of the policemen.

"The *okada* riders were fully armed with machetes, daggers, charms and other cudgels. One of the riders was said to have hit the policeman with an iron rod and others joined in hitting and stabbing him. What I noticed was that street urchins also joined the riders in attacking the policemen. The riders and the street urchins were able to seize three guns belonging to the police."

Passengers who were stranded in the axis expressed

fears that if the crisis continued, innocent people may be hit by stray bullets as the *okada* riders had become more daring by resisting the police without fear.

An *okada* rider, John Udom, said: "The government thinks they can fool us. They allowed us to ply the roads before the elections. Now that the elections are over, they have started arresting us. We must resist the police. They will kill us and get tired. We are down and we have nothing to fear. *okada* riding is not a job, but the last hope of a hopeless man. He that is down needs fear no fall, we are ready to die."

(Continued on [www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com))

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