

Crime Alert

By IDOWU OLAIDE

PANDEMONIUM broke out, Monday, at Oko-Oba, Agege area of Lagos State, when hoodlums numbering over a hundred stormed the streets, protesting the killing of one of their colleagues by an irate mob for alleged robbery.

Reports said the deceased who was also suspected to be insane attacked residents of 7, Adeketu Street, Oko-Oba, at midnight with cutlass, banging on the doors and injuring some of them in an attempt to rob them. Fortunately, he was overpowered by the residents who later handed him over to the vigilante group in the street. The group, on their part, tied him till the following day when they planned to take him to Abattoir Police Station.

Crime Alert gathered that the robbery suspect, unfortunately, gave up the ghost before day-break. The development, however, sparked off strong protest by his colleagues said to be members of commercial motorcycle riders association popularly called okada. Armed with dangerous weapons such as guns, cutlasses, axes and planks, they reportedly stormed the area around 7.00 am on Monday, unleashing mayhem on the residents while several people were seriously injured during the rampage.

Invasion of apartments

Reports also said the miscreants invaded some apartments and looted property which monetary value are yet to be ascertained including huge sums of money carted away from traders and residents of the areas.

Eyewitnesses said the looted property ranged from television sets, radio, video CD, video games, mobile phones and decorated bulbs. They were also said to have destroyed some heavy property which they could not easily loot after which they threatened to carry out more attacks in the area.

Meanwhile, the threats by the miscreants has thrown confusion into the areas, making most of the residents to desert their homes at Folorunsho, Adebari, Ilogbo

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Streets and Egbatado Road.

One of the victims who narrowly escaped death, Mr. Segun Akinoyode, shed more light on the incident. He said: “I was inside my room when suddenly, I heard noise from outside and that was around 4.00 am but I didn’t come out. I was afraid because the noise was too much. I learnt that the

man who died was beaten and matcheted to death. I was told that before he died, some people had reported the case at Abattoir Police Station. I also learnt that the man sustained injuries before he started behaving like a mad person and broke the door of 7, Adeketu Street and vandalized everything. People wondered what was wrong with the man after stories

spread that he had earlier jumped into the soak away and later came out. During that period, some security guards in the street interfered and later tied him with a rope. Later in the morning, I learnt that the man died.

“Later in the day, a group of riders who were armed with cutlasses and guns started inflicting in-

juries on anybody on sight. They were more than hundred in number. And during the stampede that followed, many people were seriously injured. The hoodlums threatened to come back at night to kill someone. It took the intervention of God that I escaped being shot because they invaded our house. Now that they were threatening more attacks.”

Another victim, a food seller, Mrs. Afolabi, popularly called Iya Afusat who lost N27,500 as well as cooked and bags of raw food stuffs during the stampede narrated her ordeal. She said: “In fact, those hoodlums have caused me a lot of problems now. All the money I kept in my wardrobe, they have stolen it. I kept N21,000 and N6,500 separately. The N21,000 was a daily contribution kept with me while the N6,500 was the sales I made that morning. The hoodlums poured away my soup, cooked rice and beans which were meant for sale. Also, many crates of raw eggs were broken including rice and beans which they poured into the gut-

ter. The bread I collected in the morning were also poured into the gutter. I didn’t offend them. I only came out in the morning to make my daily sales only for me to see them with cutlasses, guns and axes, saying that residents of this area had killed their member. I want government to help me because I have run into debt now. Bags of raw rice and beans I bought on credit have been poured into the gutter including meat, fishes and raw eggs.”

Gaming centre

A civil servant, Mr. Akinbode Akinloye who owned a gaming centre in the area also recounted his ordeal. He said: “This morning, I was at work at Alausa when I received calls that some of my property have been carted away and others destroyed by some Okada riders. I quickly went to Abattoir Police Station to report the case and when I got there, I was asked to write a statement which I did. Till now, the police have

not provided any solution or made arrests and those hoodlums are still threatening to carry out more attacks in the area. The funniest part of it is that when the hoodlums came for the second attack around 12 noon, policemen were on ground with their vehicles, yet they made no arrest and did not prevent them from injuring people. I was badly affected because they took away some of my property and destroyed my shop. I am perplexed over the situation and the way police is handling the matter.”

When *Crime Alert* visited the affected areas around 2:45 pm same day, broken bottles and shattered windows as well as two police vehicles with policemen were seen in the areas.

When contacted the Lagos State Police spokesman, SP Jaiyeoba Joseph, said he has not been informed of the incident. But when *Crime Alert* visited the Abattoir Police Station around 2:15 pm Monday, the DCO declined comment. He said: “I’m so sorry, I’m not in authority to give any information on the incident and my DPO who may speak with you is not around.”



• Few minutes after the rampage at Adeketu Street.



• Some of the hoodlums during the rampage



• One of the hoodlums chasing an old woman with plank



• The viewing centre damaged and looted by the hoodlums.

‘Okada’ riders on rampage in Lagos over death of colleague

• • loot, destroy property, injure scores