

COVID-19: Taskforce kills keke operator in Aba, another survives attack

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Tragedy struck in Aba, Abia State yesterday, as the state taskforce set up to enforce the lockdown, killed a Keke rider in the city.

This is even as another tricycle rider reported earlier to have been killed as a result of a scuffle with a policeman at Uratta junction on the Enugu–Port Harcourt expressway was alive. The scuffle led to the burning of the private car of the police officer.

Vanguard gathered that members of the COVID-19 lockdown enforcement taskforce were patrolling along Opobo road in the Ogbor Hill area when they sighted a tricycle conveying some passengers.

A source said the taskforce pursued the Keke operator, who in a bid to escape, lost control of his tricycle and rammed into an electric pole and hit his chest on the handle of the Keke.

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The Keke rider was allegedly dragged out from his tricycle and assaulted by the taskforce until he became unconscious.

On realizing he was unconscious, the taskforce members were said to have rushed him to a nearby hospital, where he gave up the ghost.

Abia State Police Commissioner, Ene Okon confirmed the incident and added that he had directed the Divisional Police Officer of Ogbor Hill Police Division to investigate the matter and bring to book those responsible for manhandling the Keke rider.

Meanwhile, another Keke operator alleged to have been killed by policemen at Uratta checkpoint survived the attack and has been arrested for defying the lockdown order.

Speaking on the second incident, CP Okon said after a tricycle operator hit someone near a police checkpoint to point of unconsciousness, a mob burnt the police inspector's private vehicle at the scene.

Okon said that the mob believed the Uratta tricycle operator had died and in anger, they burnt the officer's car for supposedly supervising the killing of the tricycle operator who did not die after all.

Police authorities, however, later released a video showing one Ifeanyi Onyema, the man said to have died, narrating his encounter with the policemen.

In the said video, Onyema who said he hails from Obokwe in Ukwu West council area alleged that one of the policemen hit him twice with a gun but on the head and he became unconscious.

He said he only regained consciousness at the hospital.