

Soldiers, touts clash as tanker crushes motorcyclist in Lagos

By Evelyn Usman & Olasunkanmi Akoni

LAGOS—Pandemonium broke out yesterday, at Second Rainbow, on the Oshodi/Apapa expressway, Lagos, after some men suspected to be soldiers attacked some touts who inflicted injury on one of their colleagues.

This is just as a tanker loaded with petroleum products rammed into a commercial motorcyclist at the Alaba bus stop on the same expressway, in the driver's bid to avoid being extorted by touts.

There were different accounts as to how the trouble started between the soldier and the touts. A version had it that the soldier was escorting a truck, which was stopped by some touts on an extortion spree and the soldier reportedly refused and was dragged out of the truck by the gang, who beat him.

Another version had it that the soldier in mufti was in a commercial bus heading towards Cele when some touts popularly called *agbero* clustered around the vehicle, demanding money.

He was said to have ordered the touts to leave the vehicle. When they refused,

he reportedly alighted from the bus to shove one of the touts away, only to be gang beaten by over 10 touts.

One hour later, the injured soldier returned with his colleagues, who descended on any tout in sight. They were still unleashing mayhem on the touts at 8 pm.

Tanker crushes Okada rider



Scene of the tanker accident.

Also yesterday, tragedy struck on the same expressway when a tanker laden with 33,000 litres of Premium Motor Spirit, PMS, otherwise called petrol, overturned, crushing a commercial motorcyclist to death.

An eyewitness said the incident happened about 6.45 pm, as the driver of the truck tried to evade being extorted by touts. The impact led to the tanker overturning and spilling its content in the process.

The deceased, whose identity could not be determined at press time, was later recovered and taken to the mortuary.

Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Emergency Management Agency, LASEMA, Dr Femi Oke-Osanyitolu, said upon receipt of the report, the agency promptly dispatched a rescue team to the scene for the recovery operation.

According to Oke-Osanyitolu, "the agency responded to an incident at the above location in which a fuel-laden tanker overturned due to a collision between the tanker and a motorcycle."

"Unfortunately, the motorcycle rider was crushed to death underneath the tanker and its contents are spilling onto the road rendering the scene extremely hazardous to other motorists and passersby."

"Meanwhile, the agency worked in collaboration with men of the Lagos Fire and Rescue Service, Lagos State Traffic Management Authority, LASTMA, Lagos Neighborhood Safety Corps, LNSC and the Nigeria Police to secure the scene and carry out secondary incident containment measures while heavy duty equipment by LASEMA had been dispatched to remove the tanker from the road.

"Residents are urged to avoid any naked flame until the incident is contained."