

SCRIPT MOTOR BIKES KENYA

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PR

It's one of the more noisy revolutions on the African continent.
The coming up of the motor bike in Kenya.
This East African country was lately flooded by cheap models from China.
It came after the government made it affordable to have one, and people started businesses with them.
Cheap for the customers, but the taxi drivers saw a sharp loss in their income.
The next report is from a town in the heart of Kenya, which changed into a haven for 'Easy Riders'.

Length: 3'00"

BETA

This is Simon Wamai.
He's very proud of the motor cycle he used to transport clients.
He does that here in Isiolo, a remote town in central Kenya.

They're on every street corner nowadays,
motor bikes.
It used to be so quiet here. Unemployment is high in Isiolo.
Many people have nothing more to do than sit in the shade.
Until one year ago.

SOUNDBITE EXHAUST PIPE

Jobless youth got them selves motor bikes.
Called 'boda bodas' in local language.
That was after the government waived VAT on motor bikes.
And banks started to offer easy loans.

QUOTE SIMON WAMAI

***We form a group. We go to the Equity Bank.
They give us a loan, and then we have to buy the motor bike.***

They cost 1,000 to 2,000 Dollars a piece,
and come from China.

SOUNDBITE MOTOR BIKES

Isiolo now has more than 100 boda bodas,
and there is competition.
Simon is making half of what it used to be.

QUOTE

Like now we have 1,000 per day, 800. Yeah.

Still most of them pay their loans in half a year.

So the numbers are still rising.
And now even the first female boda is spotted.

QUOTE BENINA GATHA

***They don't take it badly.
But some are scared to be carried by a lady.***

The inhabitants of Isiolo are quite happy with the motor bikes.

QUOTE CUSTOMER

***I like boda boda because it's cheap.
They take me anywhere I want to go.***

This is not confined to Isiolo.
The motor bike became popular in the whole of Kenya.
10,000nds are sold in recent years.
They're suited for all road conditions.
Friendly on fuel, and therefore cheaper than the taxi.

QUOTE SIMON WAMAI

We're half of it. If the taxi is 100, we take 50 Shillings.

Isiolo has a fair number of taxis.
Not happy with all these motor bikes.

QUOTE Taxichauffeur

***There are too many boda bodas in Isiolo.
For us taxis there is no business anymore.***

Also alledgedly they cause a lot of accidents.

QUOTE taxi chauffeur

***In the hospital the majority is suffering from wounded legs and other injuries.
All that for 75 cents.***

QUOTE SIMON WAMAYA

***Not true.
- Why do they that?
They want the customer to come back. Yeah.***

It's not war yet between the taxis and the bikers.
But the Kenyan government introduced licenses to regulate the matter.

This is Ruud Elmendorp, from Isiolo - Kenya.

SOUNDBITE BODA BODA