

Tension In Rivers Community Over Killing Of NSCDC Personnel



By **Anayo Onukwugha** 2 Hours Ago in **Crime**



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There is palpable tension in Umuechem community in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State following the killing of an operative of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps on Monday.

The operative, attached to the corps' Special Mining Marshal unit, was reportedly shot dead by yet-to-be-identified persons after an accidental discharge from his rifle allegedly killed a man identified simply as Bright in the community.

It was gathered that the NSCDC operative, whose identity had yet to be confirmed as of the time of filing this report, had been deployed from the unit at the corps' national headquarters.

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He was said to have accompanied government officials to the area to enforce a ban on sand dredging activities when the incident occurred.

Sources said the situation triggered a clash between sand tipper drivers and local government officials after the officer's rifle allegedly discharged accidentally, killing the victim at the dredging site.

A resident of the area told our correspondent that the NSCDC operative was later shot dead by hoodlums at the sand dump in what appeared to be a retaliatory attack.

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A senior official of the Rivers State command of the NSCDC, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to comment on the matter, confirmed the development.

He said, "Yes, the incident occurred. It involved a special mining marshal, tactical team deployed by the national headquarters. They were on inspection when it happened."

Meanwhile, authorities in Etche Local Government Area have suspended all operations of tipper drivers and parks in the area to prevent further escalation of the crisis.

The council chairman, Chima Njoku, announced the directive in a statement issued on Tuesday by his Press Secretary, Dagogo Isaac.

The statement stated, "All operations of Tipper Drivers and their parks within the Local Government Area are suspended immediately until further notice."

Njoku said the directive followed the death of the NSCDC operative who was on a national assignment with the Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel Development in Port Harcourt.

“Consequently, all officials of the Tipper Drivers/Parks Unions operating in Etche Local Government Area are directed to report immediately to the Okehi Police Division to explain their roles, if any, in the incident.

“They are also expected to clarify the circumstances that led to the blockage of the Chokocho–Igwuruta Federal Highway,” the statement said.

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