

Probe begins as soldier, wife found dead in Niger barracks

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The Nigerian Army 22 Armoured Brigade, Ilorin, Kwara State, said it had begun an investigation into the circumstances behind the deaths of a soldier, Lance Corporal Akenleye Femi, and his wife, who were found in their apartment in the Wawa Cantonment, Niger State.

The acting Assistant Director of Army Public Relations, 22 Armoured Brigade, Ilorin, Captain Stephen Nwankwo, disclosed this in a statement on Monday.

PUNCH Metro gathered that the incident, which occurred at the Wawa Cantonment in Niger State on Saturday, threw the cantonment into confusion, as residents gathered around the block where the bodies were found.

A source who pleaded anonymity because of the nature of the incident told our correspondent that the deceased officer was known to be calm and dedicated to duty, but had been acting withdrawn in recent weeks.

“He was not a troublesome person, but recently we noticed he wasn’t his usual self. Nobody knew it would end this way,” the source added.

Another resident described the atmosphere within the cantonment as “sombre and tense,” saying the couple had been seen together the previous evening without any sign of trouble.

Our correspondent gathered that the military authorities have since cordoned off the area and restricted movement around the building pending further investigation.

Confirming the incident on Monday, Nwankwo described it as unfortunate, adding that the incident occurred inside the soldier’s apartment.

“The incident occurred on October 11, 2025, inside the soldier’s apartment at Block 15, Room 24, Corporals and Below Quarters within the cantonment.

“Preliminary investigations revealed that Lance Corporal Femi, who was serving with the 221 Battalion, had been on duty within the barracks before seeking permission from his superior officers to attend to a personal matter.

“However, moments later, the bodies of the soldier and his wife were discovered in their apartment, causing panic among residents of the military facility.”

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He added that the circumstances behind the death of the couple could not yet be ascertained, while stressing that their bodies have been deposited at a morgue for further investigation.

Nwankwo added, “The tragic incident, which occurred at Wawa Cantonment, has caused a tense atmosphere, leaving the barracks residents in shock as to the circumstances that could have led to such an unfortunate event.

“The remains of the deceased have been preserved, while an in-depth investigation has since commenced to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the tragic incident.”

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He expressed sorrow over the development and extended condolences to the family, colleagues, and friends of the deceased couple.

“The Army deeply regrets this sad incident and prays for the peaceful repose of their souls. We assure the public that the outcome of the investigation will be made public and necessary measures will be put in place to prevent future occurrences,” Captain Nwankwo said.

This incident comes amidst recent reports of military personnel involved in domestic tragedies.

PUNCH Metro reported on Saturday that a soldier, Samson Haruna, in Uyo, died at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, after sustaining fire burns from an inferno on September 22, 2025.

Similarly, in September 2018, two staff sergeants of the Nigerian Army, identified as Adegor Okpako and Saka, were killed, while four others were injured in an incident at the 192 Battalion in the Gwoza area of Borno State, during what was referred to as in-theatre training in the army base.

While some people had claimed that Okpako deliberately killed Saka and injured four others before committing suicide, the Nigerian Army said it was a case of accidental discharge.

Such incidents highlight growing concerns about stress, mental health strain, and the pressures faced by uniformed personnel, especially those stationed in challenging environments.