

Man shot dead in Benin kerosene fracas

THE current kerosene scarcity in the country claimed another life yesterday in Benin City, Edo State when policemen allegedly shot and killed a 34-year-old man, ~~the~~ Aisien, during a fracas at the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) mega station on Sapele road.

Consequently, youths in the area vandalised the station, which has been shut down. Armed policemen from the Adesuwa Area Command and men of the Nigerian Civil Defense have cordoned off the entire area.

According to witnesses, a scuffle ensued when some youths attempted to access the office of station's manager in a bid to buy kerosene but were repelled by the mobile policemen attached to the station, who tea-gassed them. In the melee, a shot rang out, killing Aisien, who was at the station to fuel his car.

At 35, Sapele Road residence of the victim, his father, Solomon Aisien, a retired soldier, said: "They should bring the culprit to book. I was told he went there with his car

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to buy fuel when the thing happened. I heard that his mother was there and she fainted but was rushed to the hospital."

The victim's younger brother, who was at the scene of the incident, said: "We went there to buy kerosene and they said they were not going to sell to us and told all of us to go. On our way out, we met a chief from our area at the gate who told the police to shoot anybody. The policemen initially came to make peace.

"The first shot hit one of our friends, Imafidon, on his left wrist. The next shot hit my brother on the neck. I was standing very close to him when he fell down."

The Guardian visited the office of the Police Public Relations Officer, Peter Ogboi, twice but he was not available for comments and did not pick repeated calls to his phone.

The whereabouts of the victim's remains could not also be ascertained yesterday.