

## Six-year-old girl killed, as task force averts crisis in Plateau

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IT took the prompt intervention of the police and men of the Special Task Force (STF) on Monday to avert what could have been a bloody crisis in Mangu Local Council of Plateau State. However, a six-year-old girl died instantly in the process from gunshot.

According to an eyewitness, Mr. Moses Timchak, suspected armed robbers stormed Chichim, behind the Mangu main Police Station, at about 7.30 p.m. on Sunday shooting at random and robbing the residents of their possessions.

When the shooting and other untoward activities persisted without any security agent coming to their aid, he said, a youth leader within the vicinity, Emmanuel Dabit, summoned courage and fired a shot in the direction of the suspected bandits, who quickly took to their heels and ran towards the bridge, about half a kilometre from the police station.

However, early Monday morning, while the Children's Day celebration was on, the police in Mangu arrested the youth leader, claiming that he was one of the suspects terrorising the residents, and that he illegally possessed fire-arms. He was consequently detained at the station.

According to the account, his detention infuriated the Chichim residents who mobilised themselves to the police station demanding the immediate release of the youth, but the police would not have that, thereby leading to confrontation.

Timchak said: "They threatened to burn the police station, so some policemen took to their heels, and noticing that they were being over-powered by the angry residents, they called for re-enforcement.

"On their arrival, the police started firing shots in the air to disperse the crowd, and as well ran to people's houses nearby, beat them up

and arrested some of them.”

In the confusion that ensued, he said, “a girl of about six years old was shot in the chest and she died instantly.” At about 5.00 p.m. on Monday, the situation was said to have been brought under control, though up till now, nobody knows the whereabouts of the youth leader.

Spokesman of the Special Task Force, Captain Salisu Ibrahim Mustapha, said he was aware that there was a protest and that the situation was under control, while the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Felicia Anslem, denied knowledge of the situation.

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