

Ughelli Gas Plant Shut Over Death Of Youth

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The Otorogu gas plant in Otu-Jeremi, Ughelli South Local government Area, Delta State, has been shut down following the killing of a youth by a soldier attached to the plant from the Joint Military Task Force in the Niger Delta.

The action, we gathered, was taken to stave off reprisal attack from aggrieved indigenes of the community.

The incident occurred last weekend at the plant operated by Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC).

Addressing newsmen at the gas plant, the Otu-Jeremi

Community chairman, Chief Eric Sajini, said two soldiers reportedly confronted the youth, identified as Andrew Esifo, in Otu-Jeremi on why he wore a cap, which they claimed belonged to the military. The boy was said to have resisted their attempt to seize the cap, resulting in one of the soldiers, Ike Wachukwu, pulling the trigger on him at close range.

The community leader condemned the attitude of the soldiers attached to the gas plant, which he said for sometime now had become worrisome. He claimed that a married woman was once raped by a soldier while a policeman was also stabbed by the same soldier that killed the youth.

Coordinator of the task force, also known as Operation Restore Hope, at the gas plant, Colonel Abraim, expressed regrets over the incident and pleaded with the incensed indigenes of the community to be calm so that a peaceful settlement can be achieved. He, however, assured that such ugly incident would not be allowed again to destabilise the good relationship with the community.

At the time of this report, the corpse of the youth lay close to the kitchen of the plant's canteen. The controversial cap was also placed on his lifeless body. The oil firm's officials at the gas plant however refused to comment on the incident.