

# Tension In Delta Community Over Death Of Woman By Stray Bullet

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There was tension in Okpanam, Oshimili North local government area of Delta State, following the alleged killing of a woman by an Anti-Cult group's stray bullet.

The woman, identified as Miss Isioma Nwayalani, aged 26, was allegedly felled by a stray bullet in front of a chemist shop adjacent to the palace of Ugoani of Okpanam, located at Obodogba quarters, Okpanam, on Saturday evening.

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Findings revealed that the Anti-Cult members, in a jubilant mood, were shooting into the air sporadically, but unfortunately, a stray bullet from one of them hit the woman who is said to be a nurse. She was immediately rushed to Asaba Specialist Hospital, where she reportedly gave up the ghost at about 7.30pm.

According to an eyewitness account “the sad incident occurred when men of the Anti-Cult returned to their office also located within the same vicinity from a burial ceremony at Agbor, Ika south LGA. They were shooting into the air sporadically but unfortunately, a stray bullet from one of them hit the girl.”

Meanwhile, the president-general of the Okpanam Youth Organisation, OYO, confirmed the death which he said arose from an accidental discharge from a rifle belonging to an anti-cult member.

In a statement titled, “Okpanam Youth Organisation Condemns The Killing Of One Of Her Own” signed by Comrade Fidelis Okonma, secretary-general, OYO, in a bid to stop the rising tension, pleaded that it is essential to channel the emotions constructively, rather than allow them to escalate into further discord or unrest.

“On behalf of Hon. Lucky Okolo, the President-General of the Okpanam Youth Organisation, This heartbreaking event has understandably stirred a wave of emotions, I urge for calm and unity during this difficult time.

“The loss of Miss Nwayalani is a profound tragedy that has impacted not only her family and friends but also the entire community. In moments like these, it is natural for feelings of anger, confusion, and grief to surface.

“It is important to remember that this incident was an accident and the individual involved did not intend for such a devastating outcome. We must approach this situation with empathy and understanding, recognizing that the anti-cult member is also grappling with the consequences of this unfortunate event while in police custody. Blame and hostility will not bring back Nwayalani or heal the wounds inflicted upon our community,” he pleaded.

However, Comrade Victor Ojei, Lead Advocate For the Young Nigerian Rights Organisation, lamented that some youths in Okpanam are already trying to justify the extrajudicial killing of the nurse.

He called on Delta State government to checkmate the Okpanam Anti-Cult group and others handling guns, saying it is a strict liability in law and that calling it an accidental discharge should not be accepted.

“If he had no intention to shoot, why did he cock the gun? That’s pure carelessness. The actions of the anti-cult member resulting in the death of the nurse can indeed constitute criminal liability. The term ‘accidental discharge’ does not absolve an individual from responsibility, especially when negligence or recklessness is involved.

“You need to see how recklessly they fire their weapons daily—bullets flying everywhere. Those living in Okpanam can testify because they witnessed this abuse of power firsthand.

“The late nurse should get justice. There is nothing like accidental discharge, a gun has a safety pin. You only cock your pin when you are faced with a threat, else you ensure it is on safety,” Ojei stated.

Police Public Relations Officer, Delta State Command, Bright Edafe, confirmed the Anti-cult member whose shot allegedly hit the girl in the stomach had been arrested.