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1/2/2009

By Jide Orintunsin, Minna

Fear days before the United Nations, UN, begins hearing on the human rights violations in Nigeria at its headquarters in Geneva, a gory chapter was on Friday in Kainji, Niger State, added to the already dented image of the country.

This time around, men of the Nigerian Airforce pounced on butchers in the hitherto peaceful city of Kainji, killing two of the butchers, following a row over purchase of expired meet by an officer's wife.

The Friday cold-blood killing of the two butchers is coming barely three months after a young lady, Miss Okere was assaulted in Lagos by naval ratings in circumstances that drew public outrage and the ire of people, including that of the country's President, Umaru Yar 'Adua.

The peace of the city, Kanji located in Borgu Local Government area of Niger state was said to have been threatened on that Friday following a bloody clash. The UN is expected to review the human rights records of nations states, Nigeria inclusive, beginning from next Tuesday. The verdict of the world body usually affects the image of countries under review in the comity of nations.

Eye witness told *The Nation* that pandemonium broke in Kainji, home of the nation's first hydro-electric power station over an alleged sale of meat to a woman (names withheld) believed to be wife of an Air force officer, which she returned as unhygienic.

According to our source, violence erupted between the woman and the meat seller when the former asked for a refund of her money, having found the meat unhygienic, a demand the butler vehemently refused.

Felt insulted by the insistence of the meat seller not to meet her request, the women left the market only to return with a handful of some Air force men to compel the man to refund her money, an action which equally hit the rock as the meat seller stoke to his decision.

This effrontery did not go down with the uniformed men and in the cause of trying to compel the man, melee ensued, with other meat sellers backing their co-worker, leading to serious injury inflicted on one of the Air force men.

Sensing that the butchers were having the upper hand, the Air force men retreated to reinforce after which they invaded the market to deal with the butchers.

No sooner the Air force men arrived the market than hell was let loose, as the two groups engaged in free for all fight at the end of which two of the butchers were left dead and several of them and some members of the public injured, due to skirmishes. Witnesses said within five minutes of the clash, the ever bubbling town became a ghost of itself and that tension enveloped the town.

Though the number of the injured was unable to be ascertained as at the time of filling this report, but our source said that both sides recorded casualties and that victim are being treated at various medical centres in the town.

Our source further said that the Divisional Police Officer for the town had to make a distress call to Minna the state capital, before a detachment of Mobile Policemen were drafted to the town to restore



order.

Confirming the clash, the Public Relations Officer of the state Police command, Mr. Richard Oguche in a telephone chat said that the State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Paul Isheghohi has directed a detachment of anti-riot Mobile Police men to the town, adding that Police are a top of the crisis.

Oguche further said that Police has since commenced investigation into the cause of the fracas, which claimed lives, with several injured people. He however said that no arrest has been made so far.

"We are on top of the situation. The Divisional Police Officer has just briefed the Commissioner of Police and you know that we have drafted Mobile men to restore and maintain peace and security of the town. Investigations have since commenced on the crisis," Police spokesman disclosed.



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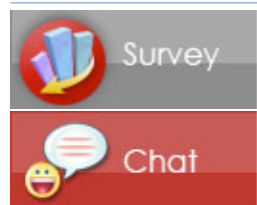
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