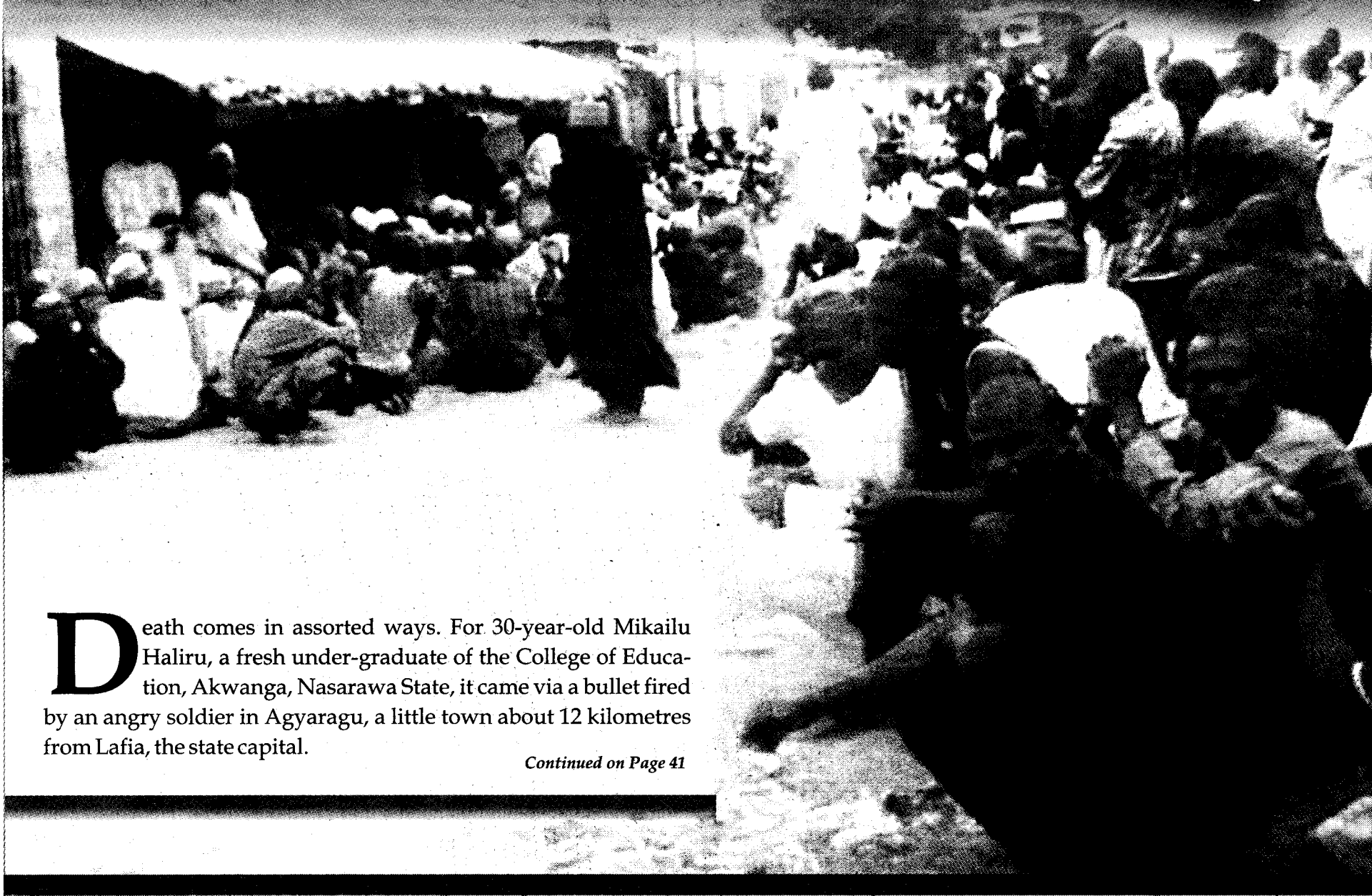


# Soldier guns down peace-maker

- Injures colleague
- Youths demonstrate



**D**eath comes in assorted ways. For 30-year-old Mikailu Haliru, a fresh under-graduate of the College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa State, it came via a bullet fired by an angry soldier in Agyaragu, a little town about 12 kilometres from Lafia, the state capital.

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NEWS

# Soldier guns down peace-maker

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The circumstances of Mikailu's killing looked odd. The soldier who allegedly killed him was one of the military personnel recently sent to the precincts of Agyaragu to help stem the menace of armed robbery in the area.

Mikailu himself was a peace-maker out to rescue his friend being questioned by the soldier. Mikailu's friend, who was allegedly seen wearing a pair of military trousers, was being quizzed by the soldier when he intervened.

Youths from the town barricaded roads and made bonfire on Makurdi/Lafia Road at about 8:00pm as the news of the Mikailu's death spread across the town.

Mikailu's friend whose name could not be ascertained at press time was said to have told the soldiers that he bought the trousers at an open market, an explanation which the soldier would not accept. On noticing the disagreement between the soldier and his friend, Mikailu stepped in to appeal to the soldier to have mercy on his friend and let him go.

The matter was said to have been initially resolved. The soldier warned the offender and released him, only to return minutes later with two of his colleagues and took hold of the man once again.

It was at his second intervention that Mikailu was allegedly shot by the soldier, who also wounded one of his own colleagues in the arm in the process. A female roadside trader was also hit, it was said. Mikailu did not survive the shot. He fell and died.

On seeing what happened, the community youths quickly mobilised and apprehended one of the military personnel, while the one who actually pulled the trigger and the others managed to escape. The apprehended soldier was severely beaten up and was hospitalised consequently.

The situation was later brought under control following the combined effort of military and police officers who quickly mobilised to the area to dislodge the youths and open the highway for motorists.

When *Newsextra* visited the family compound of the deceased, mourners and sympathisers were trooping in and

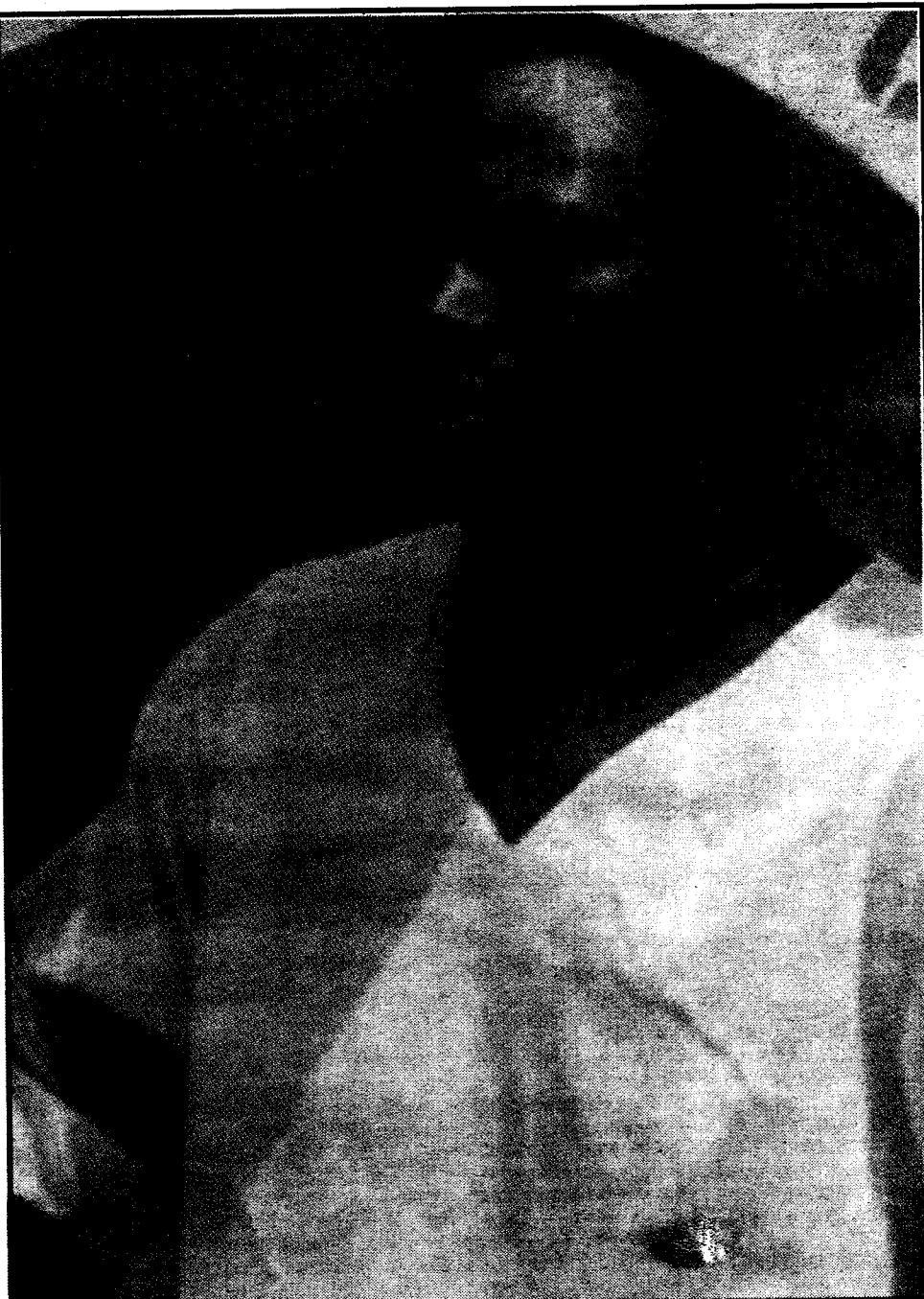
**It was at his second intervention that Mikailu was allegedly shot by the soldier, who also wounded one of his own colleagues in the arm in the process. A female roadside trader was also hit, it was said. Mikailu did not survive the shot. He fell and died**

From Jonny Danjuma, Lafia

out of the house. The elder brother of the deceased, Abubakar Haliru, who spoke with *Newsextra*, said his brother had since been buried and that the family did not intend to take any action because as Muslims, they had accepted his brother's death as the will of Almighty Allah.

A resident of Agyaragu, Musa Bala, who earlier spoke to *Newsextra*, said the youth acted as a result of a pent-up anger against the soldiers whom he said had lately been overstepping their bounds. The soldiers, he said, actually did a good job at the beginning by bringing to an end the regular banditry around the area.

But after arresting the situation, he



• Late Mikailu

said the soldiers became more or less idle and soon resorted to settling personal problems between community members.

The villagers described Mikailu as an enterprising young man who bought and sold sacks. Despite being a student, he was always engaged in one business or the other, the proceeds of which he used in training himself having lost his

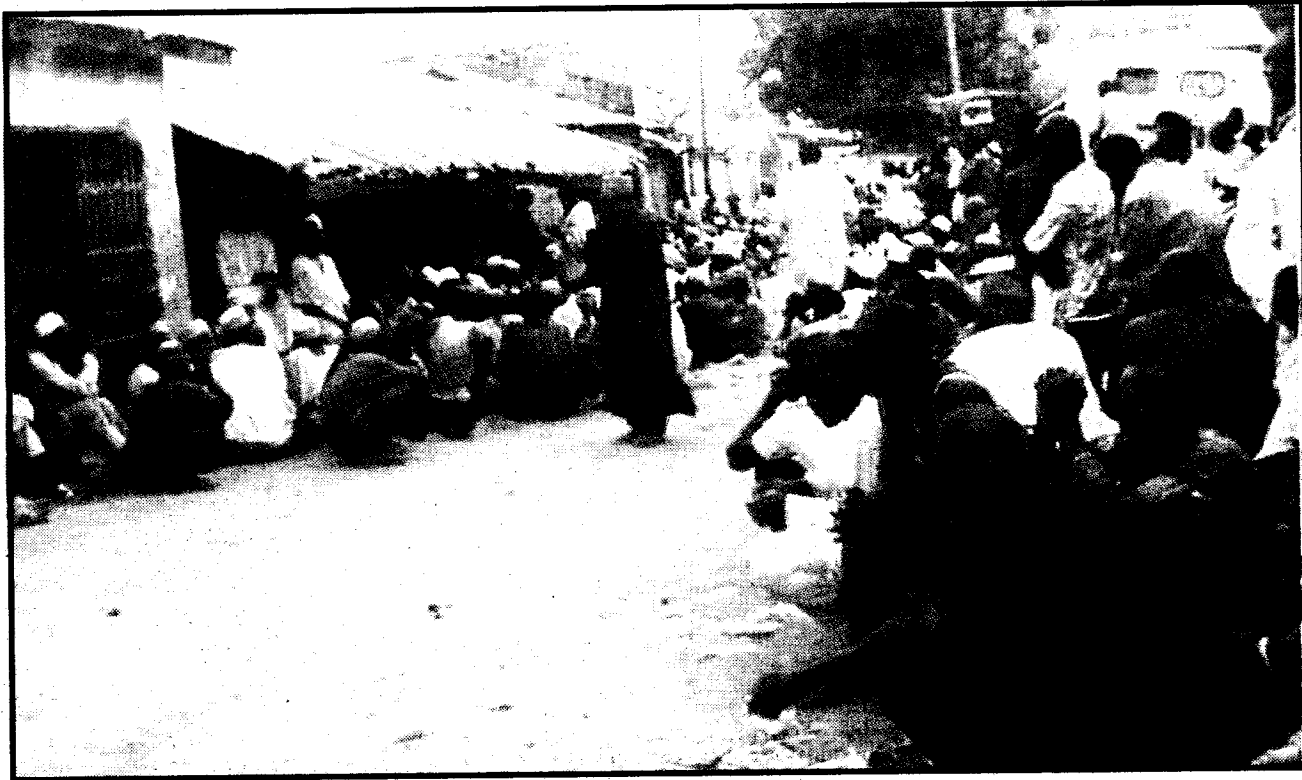
father as a child.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Richard Akoji, said he was aware of the incident, but that no report of any arrest had been made to him.

He told *Newsextra* that he had visited the wounded soldier in the hospital, adding that his condition was quite critical.



• Abubakar, brother



• A crowd of mourners at the family house