

[Home](#) | [News](#) | **Soldiers' invasion: We lost 150 people, family of four burnt to death, Delta community cries out**

Soldiers' invasion: We lost 150 people, family of four burnt to death, Delta community cries out

Font size:  

[Shola O'NEIL, Warri](#)

04/12/2010 01:35:00

Inhabitants of Ayankoromor have been counting their losses after the Joint Task Force in the Niger Delta, invaded the community last Wednesday, amidst reports of fresh confrontation between the JTF troops and armed members of the Niger Delta Liberation Force in the creeks of delta.

The Forum for Justice and Human Rights Defence, led by Mr. Oghenejabor Ikimi, a lawyer, put the death toll at about 150, including women, children and the aged.

JTF's spokesperson, Lt. Col. Timothy Antigha, however, denied killing unarmed civilians by troops, stressing that those who lost their lives were militants.

Antigha told our correspondent, "I can tell you with all honesty and assurance that if anybody was killed, that person cannot deny being a militant, because the places where the JTF opened fire were identified as militants' camps."

But Ikimi told our correspondent yesterday: "We are reliably informed that over 150 innocent persons have perished in the said military expedition, including a family of four, who were roasted alive right in their family house. Ayakoromo and other neighbouring communities are currently under the siege of JTF operatives."

The FJHD called on the international community, Amnesty International and others to prevail on President Goodluck Jonathan to 'stop the "senseless killing of innocent, law-abiding Nigerians by JTF operatives."

Our independent investigation also revealed that a prominent folklorist and traditional musician, Madam Bolero, was among the victims of the operation. Unconfirmed reports indicated that Bolero died during Wednesday's invasion of the community.

Similarly, our correspondent gathered that the remains of an octogenarian, simply identified as Mr. Oyabrade Fole, was brought to Warri from the crisis scene and deposited at Warri Central Hospital's morgue on Thursday evening.

Oyabrade was allegedly shot dead along with his 55-year-old son, Monday.

Other confirmed deaths from the incident were Egbe Tolu Terry; Kitua Onitsha, a woman who was allegedly roasted to death. Yozide Akeme and 70-year-old Yeigegha, were also reported burnt to death.

Among those reported missing were four members of one family, including a grandmother, Madam Afido Kekebo and three of her grandchildren, Opina, Motu and Tare Okekebo.

Confirming the report, Bridget Emotonghan, daughter of missing octogenarian, told our correspondent yesterday that several speedboats were dispatched to neighbouring communities to find out if her grandmother was hiding somewhere with the children.

Speaking in the same vein, a community leader, Chief Godspower Gbenekama, told our correspondent that dozens of inhabitants of the ill-fated communities were still missing, adding: "Only yesterday evening, the corpse of Oyabrade, who was killed along with one of his sons, Monday, a 55-year-old man, was brought into Warri.

"So many people are still missing and because the Army is still occupying the village, it is still very unsafe to venture in to the area. Those who can retrieve corpses of their family members are doing so and taking them out at least for them to be properly buried," Gbenekama added.

Our correspondent gathered at the time of this report that the JTF had intensified its manhunt for the leader of NDLF, 'General' John Togo, whose activities led to the latest violence in the region.

NDLF's source claimed that over 100 persons were killed in the hitherto peaceful Ayakoromor when fleeing members of the gang ran into the town with soldiers in hot pursuit.

Comments (1 posted):

Orikan on 04/12/2010 11:49:55



I think it is unfortunate if it is true that the innocent ones fell victim of the attack. Our people in the Niger Delta should, however, caution their children to stop destruction of properties under the guise of militancy. Can the villagers deny that they do not know these vandals who call themselves militants? Their activities, is a wind that will blow no one any good should they continue.



0

total: 1 | displaying: 1 - 1

Post your comment 

Disclaimer: Comments made here are the opinions of our readers and not a representation in any way of the views of THE NATION.

Your name:

Your e-mail address:

Your website: