

Residents protest police shooting of boy, three

The shooting of a three-year-old boy by a trigger-happy policeman has sparked a protest in Warri, Delta State. Residents are calling for the 'head' of the killer.
SHOLA O'NEIL reports

RESIDENTS of Warri, the oil city in Delta State, and its environs are protesting the shooting of a three-year-old boy by a police constable attached to the Anti-Robbery Squad.

Wilfred Egogo was travelling with his father, mother, uncle and four sisters from Benin, Edo State, to Warri when the police constable opened fire on the family's car around Okouejeba.

The Sports Utility Van (SUV) in which the family rode was riddled with bullets, especially in the front passenger area, where Wilfred was sitting with his father.

Blood was splattered all over the car. The front passenger's side window was shattered by bullets.

Eyewitnesses said the policeman shot the kid in the head at least three times.

They said but for the speedy escape of the trigger-happy policeman and his colleagues, a mob would have visited jungle justice on them.

It was gathered that the fleeing policemen fired sporadically into the air for several minutes to scare away the mob before beating a speedy retreat in a nearby car.

But the grief-stricken parents reportedly defied the threat to their lives as they pursued the policemen.

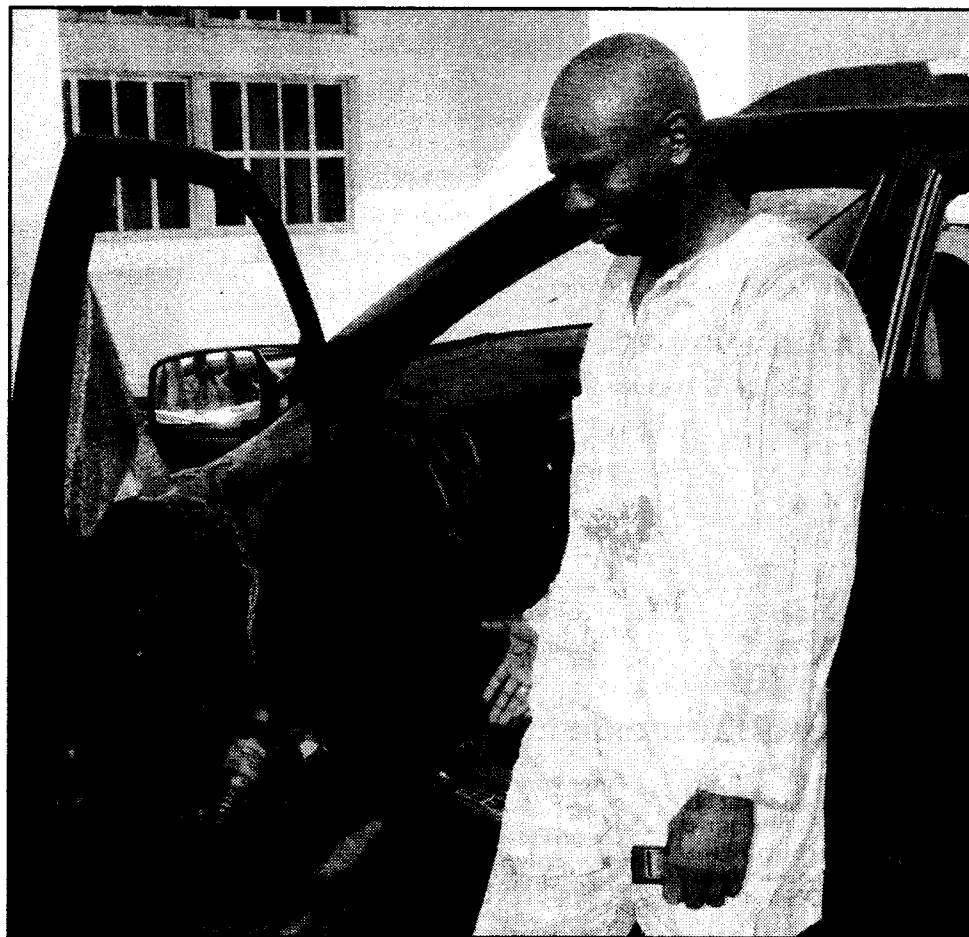
They later went to the state-owned Delta Broadcasting Service (DBS) in Warri and the Ekpan Police Station to report the incident.

It was gathered that the police constable was arrested. He is being detained at the Ekpan Police Station.

An uncle to the late child, Prosper Egogo, who spoke with reporters at the Delta Broadcasting Service (DBS), Warri, said the policeman shot at the vehicle, even after his colleagues had cleared them.

He called for a thorough investigation of the incident.

Police spokesman Charles Muka confirmed the incident.



•Egogo weeping near the vehicle

PHOTO: SHOLA O'NEIL

He said the police constable had been arrested.

Muka said there were indications that the driver of the car did not obey the order to stop for proper

checking, but "that does not justify the manner in which the police constable used his weapon."

He said the officer involved used his weapon

"unprofessionally", stressing the rules and regulation of the Nigerian Police Force did not give him the right to shoot at unarmed civilians.