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Troops to remain in Ogoni community

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THE Chairman of Khana Local Government Area in Rivers State, Mr. Greg Nwidam, has declared that military men will continue to be at Teyor Kaani (Kaani 2), an Ogoni community in the council, until criminals in area are got rid of.

Soldiers were deployed to the community on January 17 after the killing of a Lieutenant attached to the 2 Amphibious Brigade, Nigerian Army, Bori Camp, Port Harcourt. He was killed along Polytechnic Road.

According to Nwidam, "Soldiers are here and they will continue to be here, until we get rid of these people, the criminals. We do not want a lawless society. Ogoni people are peace-loving and law-abiding people.

"The lieutenant was killed at Bangha Oil filling station at Polytechnic Road, Bori, when he confronted kidnappers who came to kidnap Joyce, the daughter of the owner of the filling station. The soldier was not armed. The man died out of his goodwill. He was helping the nation, because the lady is a Nigerian.

"The lady (Joyce), up till now, we have not seen her and that is why the soldiers will continue to be here, until we see her. No soldier was killed in Kaani community."

The Councilor representing Khana Ward 6, Mr. James Barigha Nkporsor, while also speaking, said the soldiers came for the criminals at Kaani 2 (Teyor Kaani) and did not harass anybody.

Nkporsor added that the soldiers were looking for those that kidnapped Joyce, while insisting that there was no confrontation between the natives and the soldiers.

Nwidam added: "I am the Chief Security Officer of the local government. I am not biased. Nobody sent me to come and contest for council chairmanship. I saw the terrain and the way the political direction was going in Khana. I decided to come and change it for better. I am here to serve."

The chairman accused Bori Motor Park management of collaborating with and abetting criminals, adding he would have no choice, but to dissolve the park.

The 2 Amphibious Brigade of the Army and the Ogoni people of Bua Kaani had disagreed over the killing of the soldier in Ogoniland.

Two Ogoni indigenes: Dr. Goodluck Diigbo and Tambari Deekor, said soldiers on January 17 invaded Teyor Kaani, an Ogoni community in Khana LGA of Rivers State, with five persons allegedly shot, many injured and natives deserting the ancient crude oil and gas-rich community.

Diigbo and Deekor said the military invasion of Teyor Kaani took place around 6 am on January 17, with many natives manhandled and terrorised by the soldiers, whom they said came in 15 trucks.

The Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the 2 Brigade, Lt. Col. Aminu Iliyasu, however, insisted that the people of Teyor Kaani were not being terrorised by soldiers.

He said: "The attention of 2 Brigade/Sector 2 JTF Operation Pulo Shield Command has been drawn to the allegation and wish to unequivocally put the points straight. It is true that while these patriotic men (soldiers) were performing their legitimate duties in the said community (Teyor Kaani), a criminal gang shot and killed an officer."

However, the leaders of Bua Kaani maintained that the soldier was not killed in their communities.

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