

Military/Gbagyi clash: Two die in detention

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Two of the 59 villagers who were arrested during the August military/communal clash in Bosso Local Government of Niger State have died in detention, it was learnt yesterday.

A witness, Mamman Adamu, yesterday told the Justice Mohammed Mohammed-led Commission of Inquiry that the deceased were beaten until they bled to death, “even after they were confirmed dead, the soldiers still used their big stick on them.”

Adamu, who was cross examined by lead counsel to the Commission, Mrs. Janus, said he and his brother, Abubakar Adamu, were arrested as they returned to the village.

He added that they spent seven days in detention, five of which they were subjected to a high degree of torture. They were also rejected at the Criminal Investigation Intelligence Department (SCIID) because of their wounds.

“The police at the SCIID rejected us because of the nature of the wounds they saw on our bodies. By then, the smell from our wounds did not allow the police take us from the Army,” Adamu said.

Another witness, Mohammed Mobayi, said the soldiers stole N2.4 million from his room.

He alleged that the soldiers barged into his house and demanded for money. After giving them, they tied him and took him to their barracks where they tortured and broke his legs.

Mobayo, who could not stand while testifying, said he was a farmer and the money stolen was part of the proceeds from the yams he sold.

But the military and Airforce lawyer, Lt.-Col. Micheal Ede Edom, said the Nigeria Army Headquarter would not release the soldiers who carried out the search operation to testify as it is against national security.

Edom, who regretted his inability to present them before the commission, said most of the soldiers were now involved in other security operations.

Justice Mohammed however insisted that the counsel to the military and Airforce should ensure that the soldiers involved in the operation appear before the commission to testify.

He stressed on the need for the commission to hear their side of the story.

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