

Lockdown: One killed in Delta, gov orders probe

2 naval personnel beaten in reprisal

From Ebenezer Adurokiya,
Alphonsus Agbor and
Osaretin Osadebamwen

DAY two of the 14 days lockdown to ward off the spread of COVID-19 in Delta State, on Thursday, claimed its first casualty. Nigerian Tribune gathered that a young man, identified as Joseph Pessu, drove in a black Toyota Camry car without a number plate and headed to the NPA Expressway towards Ugbuwangue from Ogunnu, a suburb of Warri. Joseph was reportedly flagged down by security personnel but he refused to stop, even after his right rear tyre

was ruptured by a bullet allegedly shot by a soldier.

Witnesses said in spite of the ruptured tyre, the father-of-two still drove on from Ogunnu to NPA Expressway on the tyre rim while he was given a chase.

Joseph, who was reportedly acting as if he was under a spell, got to Ugbuwangue junction and blocked the road with his car to prevent the security men from getting to him; he then opened the door and began to run away on foot.

It was gathered that a soldier among the security personnel then shot him while he was still attempting to escape.

The killing drew the anger

of youths from Ugbuwangue community who blocked the NPA Expressway and burnt tyres.

In a reprisal attack by the youth, two yet-to-be-identified naval ratings from the Nigerian Navy Ship (DELTA), Warri, who were on a motorcycle enroute NPA Expressway, were stopped and severely beaten and their motorcycle was burnt.

The two naval ratings, who escaped death by the whisks after reinforcement got to the scene, are said to be receiving medical attention at the naval clinic in Effurun.

It will be recalled that the state government had earlier in repeated broadcasts urged

residents of the state to steer clear of public gatherings and remain indoors except those on essential duties during the two-week shutdown which started on April 1.

The soldier, who allegedly shot Pessu was said to have personally reported himself to the A Division of the Nigeria Police in Warri Area Command and is now being interrogated.

The Area Commander, Warri, Muhammed Garba, who confirmed the incident, said the family of the deceased had been contacted and the killer-security agent apprehended.

The body of the deceased has been deposited in a

morgue in Warri.

Meanwhile, the Delta State government has called for an investigation into the alleged killing of the 28-year-old.

The state Commissioner for Information, Mr Charles Anlagwu, in a statement in Asaba, said government was worried about the report of the killing by security agencies on regular patrol duty.

The commissioner said the state government had sent a delegation to the deceased family to condole with them over the loss of their son.

He stated that the military authorities had been contacted to carry out investigation into what led to the killing of the deceased.

Meanwhile, the Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Ovie Omo-Agege, has called on the Nigerian military to identify, arrest and prosecute its personnel who killed Pessu.

Omo-Agege, who described the killing as gruesome murder, maintained that only the prosecution of the perpetrator(s) would deter others from being so reckless with human lives.

According to a statement by the Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to the Deputy President of the Senate, Yomi Odunuga, Omo-Agege, spoke directly with the army and police authorities in the state to ensure there is justice for the deceased.