

NEWS

Many killed in military-civilian clash in Kwara community

Biola Azeez | Ilorin

SOME people have been reported killed in a clash between residents of Ilesha-Baruba in Baruten Local Government Area of Kwara State and men of the Nigerian Armed Forces deployed to the area on joint border drill.

Sunday Tribune could not ascertain the number of those killed as the figure was hotly disputed by residents of the area and the coordinator of border patrol.

Sunday Tribune gathered that the fracas was linked to alleged market booking fare

in Sinawu market, between the military men and commercial drivers carrying rice to the market.

It was gathered that one of the commercial drivers had allegedly given N100 bribe to the men while entering the market but refused to give another money when leaving the market.

The source in the area said his refusal to cooperate of infuriated the officers as the driver was allegedly slapped and ordered to do frog jumps while his vehicle was seized.

"Due to the development, members of the union followed the driver with the aim of talking to the soldiers on

his behalf.

"This degenerated into unpleasant arguments, leading to shooting of some drivers with three reported dead on the spot and two died later from gunshot wounds," the source said.

The police public relations officer (PPRO) of the state command, Ajayi Okasanmi, who confirmed the development said that the command had already commenced investigation into the matter.

The police spokesperson also said that normalcy had returned to the area.

But speaking on the development, coordinator of the joint Border Patrol oper-

ations in the North-Central zone, Olugboyega Peters, alleged that a mob of organised smugglers and errant youths attacked the Sector 3 checkpoint and operational base in Ilesha-Baruba on Friday.

The coordinator said only three people died in the fracas, adding that their corpses had been "deposited at Baptist Hospital Saki in line with directives from the resident NPF Area Commander".

Commenting on the development, the state governor, Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq lamented that people died during the incident.

In a statement by the gover-

nor's CPS, Rafiu Ajakaye, AbdulRazaq commiserated with families of those who died in the Friday fracas in Ilesha Baruba involving some residents and operatives of the Federal Government's Joint Task Force on Border Patrol.

"The Governor commiserates with the Emir of Ilesha Baruba Prof. Halidu Abubakar and families of those who lost their lives in the unfortunate incident.

"A government delegation is to pay a condolence visit to the affected community while investigation would be conducted to establish all the facts and forestall a repeat of the incident", he said

Also, Speaker, Kwara State House of Assembly, Honourable Yakubu Salihu, expressed displeasure over the clash.

In a statement by the Special Assistant on Media to the Speaker, Ibrahim Sheriff, the lawmaker lamented the circumstances that reportedly led to the fracas, which left scores dead and others sustaining varying degrees of injury.

"I am sad and displeased to receive news of the ugly incident that claimed lives of young and promising members of my constituency and left scores injured in Ilesha Baruba.

CLIP: PPP begin mobilisation