



## NEWS

# Soldiers' gunboat crushes Delta youth to death

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Palpable tension has gripped Aseomuku community in Ndokwa-East Local Government Area of Delta State over the alleged killing of a youth by the operatives of a military Joint Task Force known as *Operation Delta Safe* attached to an oil company, Sterling Oil and Gas Energy Company.

Our correspondent gathered that trouble started when youths from the community noticed an oil spillage in the community's only source of potable water and mobilised to visit the company to notify it of the spillage from the jetty into the River Niger.

It was gathered that the spillage occurred last week Friday during the loading one of the barges that had come to lift crude oil from the company's jetty.

community in Ndokwa-East Local Government Area of Delta State. As the spillage occurred, the oil company started pouring detergent on the crude oil to dissolve it.

“You know when spillage occurs, it spreads so fast to other parts of the river. Our youths got wind of the incident, visited the scene and started videoing it. The spillage wasn’t from a vandalised pipeline but from a damaged barge.

“The community’s youth president complained to the company’s safety manager that there was a spillage. Unfortunately, that is the water the people of the community drink.

“When they didn’t hear from the company, the youths took a speedboat to take photographs but the soldiers from the JTF asked them to stop. In the process, the soldiers used their gunboat to overrun the speedboat carrying the youths and hit one of our youths and he died in the process.

“The name of the victim is Endurance Ossai. The incident happened on Friday while the corpse of the boy was recovered from the river after a rigorous search the following day at about 6pm.”

He narrated that when the corpse was finally discovered on Saturday, youths from the community took the corpse and dumped it at the company’s gate before some officials of the company took it to a morgue in Kwale.

But when contacted, the spokesman for the Joint Task Force, Major Abubakar Abdullahi, dismissed the allegation against his operatives, stating that his men were only in the community to maintain law and order.

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