

NDLEA official kills woman during raid on Lagos community

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NDLEA File Photo

Afeez Hanafi

Family members of a 22-year-old woman, identified simply as Barakat, are in distress after she was allegedly killed by an official of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency from the Lagos State Command.

It was learnt that Barakat was shot by one of the operatives during a raid on Alasia community in the Ajah area of the state where she lived.

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Saturday PUNCH gathered that the anti-narcotic officials stormed the neighbourhood last Saturday to arrest youths allegedly smoking and peddling Indian hemp. They were said to have resisted arrest, hauling stones and bottles at the NDLEA personnel.

Our correspondent learnt that the officials shot indiscriminately in an attempt to repel the attack during which a stray bullet hit Barakat.

Angry youths were said to have mobilised to the NDLEA office in the area to exact revenge after the woman died, but were dispersed by policemen from the Ajah division.

A source, who disclosed the incident to *Saturday PUNCH*, stated that the shooting created panic in the community.

He said, “An NDLEA team raided some black spots in Alasia last Saturday in the evening to arrest drug peddlers and smokers. As the suspects were running away, the NDLEA personnel continued to pursue them. At a point, they started throwing stones at the officials, who resorted to shooting.

“There was confusion everywhere. A stray bullet hit a woman called Barakat and she died on the spot. She was in her compound. The NDLEA operatives fled after the woman was felled by the bullet. It took the intervention of the police to restore peace to the community because angry youths wanted to avenge the death of the innocent woman.”

A relative of the deceased, who spoke to our correspondent on the telephone, said the family had taken solace in God, adding that they were not ready to pursue a case against the agency.

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“We had a meeting at the NDLEA office on Wednesday and the agency promised to investigate the incident. But the family is not interested in pursuing any case. The father of the deceased was not around; he said he was not ready to drag the case further,” the relative, identified only as Kehinde, added.

Kehinde also gave the phone to a family member, who corroborated his (Kehinde’s) remarks on the family’s stance on the matter.

They both declined further comments on the incident and ended the call.

When contacted, the NDLEA Head of the Public Affairs Unit, Mr. Jonah Achema, asked our correspondent to direct his enquiries to the Lagos State Command of the agency.

Calls put across to the line of the NDLEA commander in the state indicated it was switched off. He had yet to reply to a text message sent to him as of press time.

However, the spokesperson for the state police command, CSP Chike Oti confirmed the killing.

Oti said the case had been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department, Yaba, for further investigation.

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He said, “The police received a distress call from the community that some youths engaged men of the NDLEA who were on duty in the neighbourhood by throwing bottles and weapons at them. A stray bullet hit one Barakat aged 22 and she died on the spot.

“A police patrol team intervened when the NDLEA officials were attacked in their office and normalcy was restored to the area.”

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