

# Army, MOSOP disagree over killing of Ogoni man

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## Chukwudi Akasike

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People has condemned the alleged killing of a middle-aged man, Nen-elkpege Lezor, by soldiers said to have raided Kegbara Dere community in the Gokna local Government Area of Rivers State.

MOSOP, in a statement on Saturday, said one Lenu Kpegazor, who was also hit by bullet during the alleged raid on Friday, was currently in a hopeless condition.

The statement by the acting Publicity Secretary of the apex Ogoni group, Sunny Zorvah, added that though MOSOP was in support of government effort to fight crimes in Ogoniland, it would not tolerate unprovoked military onslaught and reckless killings in communities in the area or any other place.

Zorvah said, “Galled by the latest report of shooting and killing in Kegbara Dere community, Gokana LGA, of Ogoni, allegedly by men of the Nigerian Army, MOSOP totally condemns such operation and calls on the security agencies to stop reckless killings in Ogoni communities.

“The natives stated that men of the Nigerian Army came in company of SPDC pipeline workers and started shooting without any explanation, resulting in the death of a young man and other casualties.

“MOSOP urges that security actions should be taken with respect of the rights of innocent citizens and that the military or any arm of the security agencies should act within the ambit of the law, especially, according to the rules of engagements.”

Reacting to the development, the Deputy Director, Army Public Relations, 6 Division, Port Harcourt, Col. Aminu Iliyasu, said the community was never invaded by soldiers.

Iliyasu said, “The community was at no time invaded. The bad boys setting fire on the Trans Niger Pipeline and infracting the lines attacked the oil firm’s technical crew by firing fiercely for over three hours from the evil forest, as they call it, which can only be accessed through the community from the direction the firing was coming from.

“The escort team returned fire towards the direction of the evil forest until the firing from their side was suppressed. The entire K-Dere community was complicit to the act of attacking the crew and soldiers and that what they do all the time and a bunkering point had to be clamped and taken out.”

The SPDC Media Relations Manager, Bamidele Odugbesan, said enquiries on the matter should be directed to the relevant government agencies.