

# Groups condemn killing of man by soldier in Warri

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Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. Tukur Buratai

## Onyekachukwu Meluwa and Dele Ogunyemi

The Midwest Movement/Edo-Delta Indigenous Peoples' Welfare Association and the Ijaw Women Connect Worldwide have condemned the killing of a 28-year-old father of two, Joseph Pessu, by a soldier in Ugbuwangue, Warri South Local Government Area of Delta State.

The MMEDIP also called on the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), to urgently order the Nigerian Army to restrain its men and officers from carrying out any further act of violence against the residents of Warri or any other place in Delta State and in the country.

In a statement by Dr Pedro Obaseki, the MMEDIP stated, “President Muhammadu Buhari should urgently order the Nigerian Army to restrain its men and officers from carrying out any further act of violence against the residents of Warri or any other place within Delta or any other state in Nigeria.

“Buhari should immediately set up an independent public panel of inquiry comprising relevant law-enforcement agencies and working with the Delta State Government to investigate the video (of soldiers threatening to rape Delta women) as well as the killing in order to bring all wrongdoers to justice and ensure peace and order in the city

“He should order the immediate withdrawal of soldiers from enforcement of the coronavirus lockdown as such duties are the constitutional preserve of the Nigeria Police Force.

“We do not want a repeat of incidents in the past where communities have experienced massacres in the hands of armed men in uniform acting ostensibly to avenge the alleged killing of their colleagues by civilians.

“Sad cases in point are those of the Afisiere community in the Ughelli North Local Government of Delta State in 2006 and the famed Odi massacre in Bayelsa State in 1999.

“During this period when mankind faces an existential threat, we repeat the words of the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, that ‘...there is only one war that is needed. It’s a war against the virus’. At this point in our struggles as a nation, we all need to stand together.”

The IWC, on its part, gave the Nigerian Army a knock for Pessu’s shooting to death.

The women group gave the knock in a statement jointly signed by the Worldwide President, IWC, Mrs Rosemary John-Oduone, and Chairman, Western Zone, IWC, comprising Delta, Edo and Ondo states, Mrs Evelyn Mike-Ogeleka.

It described the military personnel, who killed Joseph Pessu, as a trigger-happy soldier, insisting that the ultimate duty of a soldier was to protect and defend the lives of the citizens and not to kill them.

“Even if peradventure someone flouts the order, there are other permissible disciplinary actions to be taken against such a person and not to take his or her life,” the group stated.

It called on the Delta State Government to urgently handle the matter before it would degenerate into a breakdown of law and order in the area.

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WARRI KILLING

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