



Man dies during NDLEA's arrest of suspected drug dealer

22nd March 2024



NDLEA Officers

By Daniels Igoni

A young man identified as Moses Akanda was killed in Bayelsa State on Wednesday.

The incident occurred in the Yenizue-Epie community in the Yenagoa Local Government Area of the state.

The victim was reportedly shot dead during a commotion triggered by the presence of armed operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency who stormed the area to arrest one Rebecca, a suspected drug dealer.

Residents of the area claimed that NDLEA personnel allegedly fired shots sporadically, ostensibly to deter any resistance to the arrest of the female suspect, thereby causing confusion.

The incident reportedly agitated the youths of Yenizue-Epie, who allegedly became violent. However, relative peace was restored by the intervention of security agencies that arrived at the scene.

The community youth leadership accused NDLEA personnel of shooting at some community members during the confusion, allegedly resulting in the death of Akanda.

The President of Yenizue-Epie community youths, Martins Obiriwonsi, while asserting that the deceased “was not known to be a consumer of drugs or a cultist,” demanded justice over the youth’s death.

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However, the state command of the NDLEA claimed that its officers, who came to apprehend Rebecca, were attacked by what it described as “cult groups and youths of Yenizue-Epie community.”

A statement signed by the command’s Public Relations Officer, Daniel Obah, on Thursday, said, “Yesterday March 20, 2024, at about 1900hrs, officers of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Bayelsa State Command, upon proper surveillance carried out and pre-purchase of cannabis sativa and crack cocaine made on March 15, 2024, from a notorious female drug dealer that goes by the name Rebecca at Yenizue-Epie.

“In the course of trying to effect her arrest, the officers were attacked by cult groups and youths of that community, seized drug exhibits recovered and freed the said Rebecca. They were throwing bottles, stones and improvised explosive devices leading to an exchange of gunshots.

“However, the NDLEA officers were able to arrest one Abraham Aderin, ‘m’, 14yrs, who sparked the mob, leaving the scene with several injuries to the officers. The same cult groups and youths again in their numbers proceeded to attack the State Command HQs throwing bottles and improvised explosive devices, vandalising vehicles in the office, and dumping the lifeless body of a young man in front of the office.”

The State Commander of the NDLEA, Kanu Chukwuemeka, expressed sadness over the incident and condemned the youths for “aiding and abetting the commission of drug crimes, the bane of our insecurity problems, and obstructing the arrest of a suspect.”

The statement said the corpse of the deceased had been deposited at the mortuary of the Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa, “pending investigation into the real cause of his death.”

“While commiserating with the family of Akanda, the state commander also called for calm as the matter was being looked into,” it added.

Daniels Igoni

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