

One killed, nine arrested in Rivers clash

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NO fewer than nine persons, including members of a local vigilante group, were arrested by the police for their alleged involvement in the murder of a man identified as Oregi in Egbeda community in Emuoha Local Government Area of Rivers State.

It was gathered that the deceased, who hailed from Omuipo clan in the Egbeda community and other youth, were protesting on Friday afternoon against the deployment of a particular Community Liaison Officer to a construction company handling the Egbeda-Elele Road Construction.

Low entrance to unity schools

He lamented that the 2024 registration was lower than that of 2023 which had 34,064 males and 38,801 females, totalling 72,865.

Data released by the council showed that Lagos came top with the highest number of candidates, totalling 17,751, while FCT came second with 10,209 candidates and Anambra in third place with 4,972 candidates.

Bayelsa, Borno and Gombe had the least number of candidates participating in the exercise, after registering only 133, 138 and 174 candidates respectively.

The NECO boss attributed the low registration in 2024 to economic factors as the exam body had slightly raised the registration fee and parents, who are grappling the effect of the economy, were responsible for sponsoring candidates at this level.

A source in the community, who pleaded anonymity, told our correspondent that the youths were reportedly warned by the local vigilante codenamed OSPAC not to embark on the protest. Still, the youths called their bluff and commenced the protest.

OSPAC is an acronym for Onelga Security Peace Advisory Council.

He said while the protest was going on, some of the OSPAC members intercepted them at Egbeda roundabout and urged them to stop, but the youths refused on the ground that they had the right to express their opinion peacefully.

He stated, "They (protesters) even carried a casket to the company premises but left after some money was given to them.

"But instead of stopping the protests, they started marching around Egbeda community singing war songs that warranted the OSPAC to confront them.

"In the process, the OSPAC Commander got angry and opened fire on the protesters.

"That was how Oregi was hit by a bullet resulting in his death. Oregi is a young man from Omuipo community. Some of the other protesters received injuries from the gunshots."

Asked if the protesters were armed, he said, "They were not armed but they carried bottles and sticks."

The source further said that irked by the death of the young man, the youths immediately mobilised and headed straight to the residence of the vigilante commander identified as Muffi and set it ablaze.

"They went to the OSPAC Commander's house and burnt it. We even heard that his father was inside the house, but I can't confirm that part of the story,"

"So, you know the community was in confusion and the police came and arrested Muffi with his fellow vigilante men."