

Kaduna youths protest colleague's death, demand justice

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Map of Kaduna State

A protest broke out in the Barikallahu community of Kaduna State on Thursday over the killing of a resident, identified as Godwin, by personnel of the Nigerian Air Force.

The protesters, mainly youths, are demanding that the Air Force authorities should identify and bring to justice the soldiers who stormed the community on Wednesday.

In a video seen by our correspondent, on Thursday, residents were seen carrying various placards in a protest.

Some NAF personnel stormed the area near the Air Force Institute of Technology in Kaduna State on Wednesday night, killing one person and injuring two others.

The incident, which occurred around 10 p.m., was captured in multiple videos obtained by our correspondent. Footage showed a vehicle painted in military camouflage, bearing the NAF logo, arriving in the community. Our correspondent counted five armed soldiers, apart from the driver, stepping out of the vehicle.

In one of the videos, residents were seen fleeing as the soldiers advanced.

Another clip shows the personnel apprehending a man and beating him while voices from inside the vehicle shouted in Pidgin English, “Put am inside, put am inside” (Put him inside).

A separate video captures the soldiers firing sporadically into the air before the recording was abruptly cut.

Another video shows a large crowd mourning the deceased victim.

Speaking anonymously due to fear of reprisal, a resident told PUNCH Metro that the NAF personnel had been aggressive to residents before Wednesday’s incident.

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The resident claimed that a NAF officer who had an issue with a resident because of a woman mobilised his colleagues to the community.

He said, “This happened at a village not far from the Air Force Institute of Technology in Kaduna. Before this incident, residents had a lot to say about the aggressiveness of the soldiers. There was a time when a curfew was introduced in this area that people should not go out. We were watching football and the soldiers came and scattered everywhere, people’s properties went missing among others.

“Yesterday’s attack started because of a fight between a soldier and a resident over a woman. The soldier later returned with his colleagues, and they started beating people, shooting into the air, and chasing everyone.

“Unfortunately, the person who was killed knew nothing about the whole thing, he was hit by a bullet from the gun shot by the soldiers and he died. The two others were shot- one on his shoulder, the other on his leg. They are presently in the hospital. It was a tragic incident that has caused panic in the whole of the community.”

Another eyewitness, who also requested anonymity, described the chaos thus, “The soldiers entered our area, killed one person, and injured two others. They were just shooting anyhow. I saw the boy die right in front of me.”

When contacted, the Air Force spokesperson, Air Vice Marshal Olusola Akinboyewa, confirmed that an investigation was underway.

“An investigation is ongoing as we speak. The Kaduna Base Commander is currently engaging with the affected community,” Akinboyewa told PUNCH Metro.

In a statement, Akinboyewa expressed regret for the death of the victim, adding that the service had reached out to his family.

He assured the community that any person found culpable would be brought to book.

He said, “NAF confirms that an incident involving its personnel and some civilians occurred on February 26, 2025, at Unguwan Gangare, Barakallahu, Kaduna State. The unfortunate incident resulted in injuries to some individuals, who are currently receiving medical care at the 461 NAF Hospital. Additionally, we deeply regret the loss of life and have reached out to the family of the deceased to express our condolences and assure them of a thorough investigation and justice.

“The NAF remains a highly disciplined and professional force committed to upholding the highest standards of conduct in all engagements. A full investigation into the circumstances surrounding this incident is already underway. Any personnel found culpable will face the full weight of the law in line with our commitment to justice and accountability.

“We urge members of the public to remain calm as we work diligently to ascertain the facts and ensure that appropriate actions are taken. The NAF remains steadfast in its duty to protect and serve the Nigerian people while maintaining the trust and confidence of our host communities.”