

Police hiding corpses of our members – Shi’ites

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FCT Police Public Relations Officer, SP Josephine Adeh

By Solomon Odeniyi

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The Islamic Movement of Nigeria, popularly known as the Shiite group, has accused the police of hiding the corpses of its members who were allegedly killed during a clash that erupted on Friday as a result of their procession.

Shiite said six of its members were killed, and 380, including women and children, were arrested and detained by the police.

Members of the movement and soldiers clashed during a procession marking the International Quds Day in Abuja on Friday.

The FCT command spokesperson, Josephine Adeh, in a statement, accused the Shiite members of attacking security operatives, saying they were armed with firearms, cutlasses, catapults, sticks, stones, and petrol bombs.

She said the confrontation led to intense gunfire, leaving two security operatives severely injured and one confirmed dead at the National Hospital.

According to Adeh, 19 suspects were arrested in connection with the incident, while others managed to escape.

However, addressing journalists on Saturday in Abuja, the Resource Forum of the IMN, led by Prof Abdullahi Danladi, alleged that security agents were hiding the bodies of those killed in the clash.

He said, “The police might have said they arrested 19 of our members but reliable information confirmed that the Guard Brigade and the police have arrested 380 protesters, including women and children, and six people were confirmed martyred.

“Those arrested are being detained at SARS Abbator, Guzape, Abuja, and those that reached martyrdom include Shaheed Ibraheem Dalhat (Sharif Albani), Shaheed Nasir Abubakar, Shaheed Abdulaziz Abubakar, and Shaheed Auwal Abbas Bichi among others.

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“However, the security agents are hiding casualties and other corpses of those who passed away in unknown places, thus, the number of casualties and corpses with the Guard Brigade and the police are still unknown. Nevertheless, we will update the public in due course.”

He also dismissed the police’s accusations that member of the group were armed with dangerous weapons, describing it as a cover-up.

Danladi said, “They said we came with dangerous weapons; they have every reason to say what they want to say to defend their crimes. But it is a known fact that the IMN had been carrying out our activities over 40 years. Whenever we gather, we gather and disperse peacefully but it only when the police or security operatives attack us that you hear about casualties.

“We don’t kill or injure security operatives. In fact, it is not in our character rather we fight for their rights and that of the citizens. We don’t kill or injure anybody, we make life easier for everybody.”

He, however, demanded for the unconditional release of the arrested members and prosecution of those responsible for the deaths of their members.

Speaking on the proscription of the movement, Danladi stated that the matter was still being challenged in court, arguing that even if a ban was in place, it would not justify the alleged extrajudicial killings.

When contacted, Adeh requested the group to provide proof that their members were killed.

She lamented that despite the proscription of the group, they were always attacking security agents unprovoked, saying that would no longer be tolerated from them.

Adeh said, “The Shiite group is proscribed; therefore, their activities are illegal. Members of this group are always armed with firearms, cutlasses, catapults, sticks, stones, and petrol bombs and are known for attacking security agents without provocation. This will no longer be tolerated. As for the casualties they claim, let them provide proof.”

Solomon Odeniyi

The PUNCH journalist, Solomon, has five years experience covering crime, judiciary and defence beats.