

Vigilance Group Leader, Bizman Shot Dead

UBONGGEORGE/Makurdi

Angry youths in Zaki Biam in Ukum LGA, Benue State, have protested the death of Mr. Oradueen Joka, Chairman of the vigilance group in Zaki.

He was allegedly shot dead by policemen during a gun battle with armed robbers.

A prominent businessman was also killed by the robbers who raided Kaffe Lodge where the businessman stayed that night.

P.M.NEWS gathered that the incident occurred during a police raid of the area.

P.M.NEWS learnt that the robbers stormed the town around 1.30 a.m. on the fateful day and operated at Kaffe Lodge in Zaki Biam for almost two hours.

Narrating the incident to newsmen in Zaki Biam, the General Secretary of Nigeria Vigilance Group, Zaki Biam chapter, Mr. Christian Bokon, said he was on duty on the fateful night at a checkpoint located some few metres away from the popular Zaki Biam Yam Market, when he heard gunshots around Kaffe Lodge situated along Yam Market road.

He said less than five

minutes later, he heard more gunshots but with greater intensity at the branch of a first generation bank in the area.

According to Bokon, when the gunshots became intensified, the four of them on duty, namely Akigh Terzungwe, Agber Tine and the slain Oradueen Joka took to their heels.

He explained further that the following morning he was told that his boss was shot and killed, adding that the police might have met the chairman on his way home and mistakenly took him for an armed robber and eventually shot him dead.

Confirming the death of the Vigilance group boss, the local government chairman, Mr. David Sev-Av, appealed to the youths of the area not to take the law into their hands. He assured that the council and the security agents were already on top of the unfortunate incident so as to ascertain the circumstance that led to the death of Joka.

P.M.NEWS investigation revealed that for a long time, the relationship between the vigilance group and policemen in the area has not been cordial, with law enforcement agents accusing the group of taking over their constitutional functions.

Corroborating P.M.NEWS

investigation, the Secretary of the vigilance group, Mr. Bokon maintained that on several occasions they had been arrested and detained by the police even while on duty.

He called on stakeholders in the state, particularly the state government and other relevant agencies of government to wade into the matter.

He also urged the state government to provide uniforms to them for proper identification just as it is done in other localities outside the state.

Bokon also called for enlightenment programme for the police to understand that they are playing complementary roles with them and not the other way round.

In a related development, robbers invaded St. Anthony Catholic Zaki Biam Parish carting away over N200,000 cash, including other valuable items.

However, no life was lost during the robbery attack.

The Parish Priest told P.M.NEWS under anonymity that the four robbers stormed the parish and demanded for cash and other valuable items such as handsets and electronic gadgets.

He said the incident had been reported to the police.

Efforts to get police reactions on the two incidents

proved abortive as the police spokesman, Mr. Apalaku

Dauda was said to be away on an official assignment.



•Inspector-General of Police, Hafiz Ringim.

Princess Of Rome Foodstuffs Dies