

YOU ARE AT: [Home](#) » [National](#) » Navy denies killing MASSOB members

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1

BY OUR REPORTER ON SEPTEMBER 6, 2015

NATIONAL

FROM FEMI FOLARANMI, YENAGOA

The Nigerian Navy, Central Naval Command (CNC) has denied the killing of some members of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) by their operatives in Anambra

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BUSINESS

SPORTS

EDITORIAL

ENTERTAINMENT

FEATURES

OPINION

COLUMNS

The operational area of the CNC with headquarters in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State covers Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, Anambra and Kogi states.

The Flag Officer Commanding (FOC) CNC, Rear Admiral Stanley Ogoigbe, who debunked reports of the killings while briefing newsmen at the command headquarters yesterday, said it became necessary for him to personally clear the air on the rumoured killings, which he described as untrue.

There had been reports of a clash between Naval personnel and MASSOB members, during which some people were allegedly killed.

Ogoigbe said the Navy personnel only shot into the air to disperse a large number of MASSOB members who were on a protest march towards the Onitsha head bridge, noting that some protesting youths had already overrun the policemen on duty at the foot of the bridge.

He said: "No such act was ever committed. The MASSOB group was on a protest march. They overran the policemen that were on duty, and were coming towards the Navy personnel. As they approached, the Navy fired warning shots into the air to scare them away, and they all scampered. Nobody died in the process.

To our surprise, MASSOB started claiming that Navy personnel killed two of their men. I don't know what they wish to achieve with this propaganda and fabricating stories against the Navy.

"We just want all well-meaning Nigerians to know that no MASSOB member was killed in that area of

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Anambra State, where the Navy was keeping peace and carrying out their legitimate duties. It was not only Navy that was there, the police and other security agencies were also there, and they all confirmed that nobody was killed. I don't know where MASSOB manufactured their story. That is why I am taking the responsibility to clear the air to avoid an unwarranted tension."

The Commanding Officer, Naval Outpost, Onitsha Navy Capt. Dika Kwabe who corroborated Ogoigbe's remarks said there was no proof in the claim by MASSOB that the Navy killed her members.

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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