

Tension in Aba as soldier kills Okada rider over N100

From Okey Sampson, Aba

TENSION mounted in Aba, Abia State, yesterday following the killing of an okada rider by a trigger happy soldier. This caused serious protest that brought business activities to a standstill within the Ogbor hill axis of the commercial city.

It was gathered that the commercial motorcyclist, Chimaobi Uzoukwa, who hailed from Umuokereke Ngwa, in Obingwa Local Government Area, went through a military checkpoint at Ohanze, which has become notorious for the brutality of civilians in the area.

The okada rider was said to have been stopped by a soldier at the military check-

point and allegedly demanded for N100 bribe even when the cyclist was reported not to be carrying any passenger.

Uzoukwa was reported to have told the soldier he had no money that he

did not go to work, and went straight to his house, which was about eight kilometres from the checkpoint.

Not happy that the motorcyclist did not 'drop' as demanded, the soldier reportedly commanded another person, who pursued Uzoukwa to his house, shot him dead and went back to his

duty post.

When people who heard the gun shot gathered and found out that the okada rider was dead as a result of the bullet wound, they carried his corpse to the popular Opobo Junction which action triggered off heavy protests.

During the protest, which lasted till late yesterday evening, human and vehicular movements were disrupted.

A Mopol 55 Squadron vehicle permanently stationed at the Opobo Junction was set ablaze. Also set ablaze was a makeshift Mobil police outpost while policemen

on duty were chased away.

When our reporter visited the scene, bonfires made with disused tyres and other object were seen at various points on Ikot Ekpene Road just as the police van was still burning.

At about 6.15pm, a reinforcement of contingent of mobile policemen were seen at a strategic area of Opobo Junction as people hurried home to avoid being cut in the web.

At a military checkpoint on Opobo Road, less than one kilometre from Opobo Junction, gunshot was heard probably to warn the protesters of the danger of getting close.

The protesters carried the corpse of the slain motorcyclist to some media houses within the Ogbor Hill to register their grievances.

The spokesman of the 14 Brigade, Ohafia, could not be reached for comment, but a senior army officer, who wouldn't want his name in print, said the army leadership is on top of the situation.

Family of slain corps member alleges cover up

From Paul Osuyi, Asaba

THE family of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) member, Miss Lilian Nghanwe, who was murdered recently, has raised alarm over alleged plots to cover up the crime and release the prime suspect, Eze.

Miss Nghanwe, who hailed from Issele-Mkpete in Aniocha North Local Government Area of Delta State, was a serving corps member in

the family's disposal to the effect that plans were being made to sweep the matter under the carpet, alleging that there were powerful persons behind the murder suspect.

"We are actually very worried that a whole lot is going on. We were surprised a few days ago to hear that the suspect, who had earlier confessed to the crime, is deaf and dumb.

"Meanwhile, he spoke and confessed to the crime before the police initially. We want the whole world to be aware of this latest development and equally want the government or police not to cover up