

4 killed, 16 injured as soldiers enforce lockdown in Taraba community

A CULTURAL festival turned deadly on Saturday in Taraba State after soldiers sent to enforce a lockdown allegedly shot dead four residents and injured 16 others.

The Taraba State Government, on April 21, in a broadcast by the state's deputy governor, Haruna Manu, announced a lockdown order in the state to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The violence occurred at Jen community in Karim-Lamido Local Government Area of the state. The festival turned violent when the residents resisted an attempt by the soldiers to disperse them and prevent the festival from holding.

Residents said the festival, called Minhu hunting festival, is celebrated annually every first week of May. It is the major cultural festival of the Jen community and is recognised by the government as a major festival in the state.

Three residents of the community, who spoke, asked not to be named for fear of arrest during investigation.

One resident said the district head of Jen, Samaila Agwaru, had earlier announced the suspension of the festival based on the government's lockdown directive.

"Initially, the soldiers enforced the lockdown on the community market on Friday. While trying to prevent the festival on Saturday, a group of youth confronted the soldiers setting ablaze used tyres.

"The soldiers fired gunshots into the air to scare the youth. However, the undeterred rampaging youth shot one of the soldiers with an arrow after which the soldiers opened fire on them," the source said.

It was learnt that four people died at the scene while 16 others sustained severe gunshot injuries. Some of the injured are said to be in critical condition.

Two of those killed were identified by their nicknames, Iliya and Black, while the two others are yet to be identified because they came from neighbouring communities to celebrate the festival.

The injured soldier was said to have been taken away by his colleagues.

A resident said the community's market leader (Sarkin Kasuwa), Jibir Sarkin-Fawa, was critically injured by the aggrieved youth who accused him of colluding with the government to prevent the festival from taking place.

Jen is one of the major communities in Karim-Lamido Local Government

Area. It is predominantly occupied by the Janjo tribe although there are other tribes such as Dadiya and Bambuka. The local government shares a land border with Adamawa, Gombe, Plateau and Bauchi states. Jen is one

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IGP condemns attack on police officers in Oyo

• 2,310 violators arrested in Lagos

By **Christopher Oji**

THE Inspector-General of Police, M.A Adamu, has commended the Divisional Crime Officer, Eruwa Police Division, Adeyemo Ogunyemi, for his uncommon restraint and professionalism in the face of unprovoked attack as shown in a viral video where a woman identified as Kehinde Afolake was seen assaulting him unchallenged and without retaliation.

The DCO was attacked while he was carrying out the COVID-19 enforcement duty at Gbolagunte, Okeola area of Eruwa, Ibarapa, Oyo State on May 1.

Also in Lagos, 2,310 lockdown violators were arrested while 2,092 vehicles, 1,535 motorcycles and 369

tricycles were impounded, and the police said they were fully ready for the next phase of the enforcement. In a statement by Force public relations officer, Frank Mba, he said: "The officer, like a lamb being led to the slaughter, did not fight back, but rather maintained absolute calm, patience and decorum even as the woman rough-handled him and slapped him severely.

"The said woman also assaulted two female police officers, Insp. Ojola Abiola and Insp. Queen Eguaoje, and gave one of them human bite on Saturday, May 2, during an attempt to invite her to the police station for the earlier incident of serious assault on the DCO. The Ewura incident is a classic example of unprovoked, unwarranted and unnecessary attacks faced by police officers in the course of performing their legitimate duties. The IGP, therefore, warns that this trend will no longer be tolerated by the Force.

"The IGP notes that since the commencement of the COVID-19 enforcement duties, a total of 27 police personnel have suffered various