



2 killed, many injured as security agents attack protesting students in Taraba

From SYLVANUS VIASHIMA, JALINGO

AT least two persons were killed and many others injured following a clash between protesting students and personnel of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps backed by soldiers attached to Operation Whirl Stroke at Peva community in Takum local government area of Taraba State.

A community leader, Zaki James Akombo told our correspondent on the phone that trouble started when students of a secondary school, Holy Ghost Secondary School in the community went to the NSCDC office to demand for the release of their principal who was arrested by men of the Corps.

"I was told that a teacher, Mr Matthew in the said secondary school impregnated a female student, Ngufa Kavga and the father brought security agents from the neighbouring Benue State to arrest the teacher.

"On getting to the community, the security agents went to the school to effect the arrest. The said teacher was not in school but on sighting the girl, the NSCDC officials went after the girl and arrested her.

"Pandemonium ensued and the school principal who came out to see what was happening was also arrested. The students followed the officers to their station demanding for the release of their principal which led to the clash and one female student was found dead after the incident." He further explained that on discovering that the student was killed in the process, tension rose and in the process of calming frayed nerves with a view to ensuring law and order, another person was killed likely from a stray bullet from men of Nigeria Army Operation Whirl Stroke who were shooting in the air to disperse the crowd that was gathering.

"I don't think the army killed the second person intentionally, because he was killed by a stray bullet. When the youths were mounting the road block on the highway with tyres, they were warned and one of them was eventually killed by a stray bullet when soldiers were trying to restore normalcy in the area." The community leader who said the Deputy Commissioner of Police in Taraba was in the area with the Takum LGA Chairman Mr Shibani Tikari and the Divisional Police officers of Takum and Katsina-Ala said the community was assured that the incident will be investigated.

Council Chairman of Takum, Mr. Shibani Tikari could not be reached when our correspondent called but one of his aides said he was holding a meeting at the time of the call. Taraba State Police Public Relations Officer, ASP David Misal did not pick his calls as at the time of filing this report, while his counterpart in the NSCDC promised to get back to our correspondent which he never did as at press time.