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Nigeria: Kerosene Tragedy - Victim Shot in Self Defence -Police

Vanguard (Lagos)**17 September 2008**

Posted to the web 17 September 2008

Simon Ebegbulen

The Edo State Police Command, yesterday, said the mobile policeman who shot dead 34-year-old Ebenezer Aisen at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) mega station last Monday, carried out that action in self defence.

It also declared missing a Mobile policeman who was at the filling station to protect it against the Ogbelaka youths who were at the station to vandalise it.

Meanwhile, the family of the deceased has raised an alarm over what it described as an unwarranted arrest of two relations of the deceased by the police for their alleged involvement in the crisis at the mega station, calling on the Inspector-General of Police to investigate the killing of their son and also effect the release of those who were detained unjustly.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Peter Ogboi who briefed newsmen in Benin, regretted that the ugly incident happened due to the action of the youths who were insisting that they should be given diesel and kerosene free of charge as against the directive of the management of the station.

He narrated: "The management of the mega station had earlier reached an agreement with Ogbelaka youths because of pressure mounted on them that NNPC must not operate in the area until they give consideration to the host community. And it was agreed that they have to buy diesel and kerosene just to compensate them.

But a section of elders of the community came and dropped another list of youths as their representatives and warned the management of the station to stop dealing with those youths.

"So when the youths came, the management told them the situation that they won't be given diesel or kerosene until the matter is settled. The policemen attached to the station came out to advise them to go but they went and regrouped in large number.

They started throwing stones at the policemen and seized the nozzle and started operating the place on their own. The manager of the station was held hostage, until he was rescued by our men who were on guard there.

"So it was at this point that the manager put a call across to us. So we deployed our men immediately because they came with dangerous weapons. Infact, they were about burning down the place and even kill our

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men there when that shot came and the boy was killed.

As it is now we do not even know who did the shooting but we know that our men have to protect their lives because the youths came in large numbers and there was tension every where.

"You are aware that we have to protect Federal Government property and cash in the place and it must not be compromised.

"And as I am talking to you now, one of our men is even missing, that is the report the OC CID is giving us now. And we are ransacking every where to ensure that we find him.

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"People should also talk about our people who are killed in action. Those policemen there would have been killed if they had not protected themselves and we must also talk about that." he stated.

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