

# Bayelsa Community Insists on Prosecuting Six for Extra-judicial Killing

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Elders and leadership of the Adiegbe community in Ekeremor Local Government Area of Bayelsa State have insisted on the prosecution of the Coordinator of Tantita Security Services and six personnel of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) for their alleged involvement in the killing of three youths of the community.

The community has accused the security personnel attached to Tantita Security Services for extra-judicially killing the three young men over an alleged involvement in illegal bunkering and oil theft on the order of the Coordinator of the security company, 'General' Gowon Abenzi.

According to the Community, the accused NSCDC personnel, numbering six and attached to Tantita Security Services who are handling the Bayelsa State section of the anti-crude oil theft contract awarded to Government Ekpemupolo, popularly known as Tompolo, allegedly shot dead the three youths on October 28, 2022, on the purported order of the Coordinator of the company in Ekeremor Constituency 1, Abenzi.

The Paramount Ruler of the community, HRH Benedict Thompson; the Chairman of Community Development Commi-ttee (CDC), Anthony March, and the Secretary of the CDC, Teacher Fundudiegba, told journalists in Yenagoa that despite the peace initiative taken by the Bayelsa State Coordinator of the security company, Joshua Machiver, to calm frayed nerves, the community insisted that the six NSCDC personnel involved in the extra-judicial killing of the youths must face criminal charges.

The CDC Chairman, Anthony March, whose younger brother also sustained fatal gun injury on the navel and later died in the hospital, identified the youths killed as Kato Sanuku, 27, Tebekemi Pakemi, 35, and Comboye March, 37.

He said: “The tragedy started with the claim by the Coordinator of the company, Abenzi, that one Dimiere (alias DJ) was arrested in Tuomo in Delta State charges of alleged involvement in bunkering. The attempt to settle the matter failed as the Tantita boys insisted that they must get other youths involved.

The arrested DJ was tied and brought to the Adiegbe community on a boat due to the ravaging flood. Leaders and indigenes of the community attempts to settle the issue was rebuffed. At about 5p.m., the youths returned to the community and demanded that the arrested DJ be released. Abenzi and his boys refused and it degenerated into a scuffle. While they attempted to whisk away DJ, the youths held unto the rope of their boat and Abenzi ordered that they be shot.”

The Secretary of the CDC, Fundudiegha, also pointed out that though one of the NSCDC personnel declined to carry out the shooting order, “Gowon Abenzi struggle the gun with the personnel, and in the process, the arrested DJ escaped from the boat and they opened fire on the youths. At the end, one of the Adiegbe indigenes, who was working with Tantita, Comboye March, sustained a fatal injury and died. Two other youths also died.”

He said the incident was reported at the Divisional Police headquarters at Aliebiri community, and their corpse were deposited at the General Hospital in Bomadi.

The Paramount Ruler of the Adiegbe community, Benedict Thompson, in his position, called on the headquarters of the NSCDC and the Department of State Security (DSS) to investigate the case of extra-judicial killing and bring to book the killers of their sons.

He said: “The community is angry and demanding that the so-called General Benzi and the six NSCDC personnel should be brought to justice to avoid bloodshed in Ekeremor Local Government Council.”