

Cultists kill lecturer, three others at University of Port-Harcourt

Four persons, including a lecturer, were confirmed dead yesterday, at the Choba campus of the University of Port-Harcourt, when armed cultists stormed the institution shooting indiscriminately at anyone in sight.

The shooting which took place in the early hours of yesterday, when the campus was in full swing, led to the death of a lecturer with the institution's faculty of education, Dr Ozuru, two yet to be identified students and a middle-aged woman.

Another university don

**From Henry Omonu,
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and several other innocent by-standers sustained serious injuries during the shooting spree.

However, in swift response, the military Joint Task Force (JTF) in Rivers State engaged the cultists in a gun battle at Mbodo village, near Aluu in Emuoha local government area, killing two of the suspected cultists in the process and arrested another while two others escaped.

Daily Trust learnt from eyewitnesses that the cultists armed with AK 47 rifles,

arrived in the university, riding on three motor-cycles, and headed for the security post leading into the school, in search of the chief security officer of the university.

While the chief security officer, who was the main target of the cultists was lucky to escape, the eyewitnesses said the dead lecturer, said to be visiting the chief security officer at the time of the attack was not so lucky as he was shot in the back by the gun men.

Incensed that they have missed their target, the cultists turned their guns on anyone on sight, shooting

indiscriminately in all directions, killing three other unsuspecting victims and injuring several others.

Frantic calls by members of the university community to security agencies led to the swift response of a detachment of the JTF.

A JTF source told our correspondent that the soldiers chased the killers to Aluu community, upon which they abandoned their motor-cycles and fled on foot into the nearby bushes.

"But we followed them, and eventually caught three of them, we are still looking for the others", the source said.

The arrested cultists were subsequently paraded before the university community, before being handed over to the police for questioning.

Because of the incident, authorities of the university have beefed up security in the campus to restore confidence and reassure students and other members of the university community of the school's ability to protect lives and property within the precincts of the institution.

Our correspondent reports that the car of the slain lecturer, a Honda Acura Legend with registration number AG 432 DBU, was seen still parked at the university's security post, while those who sustained bullet wounds during the shooting had been taken to the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH) for medical treatment.



Speaker, House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole (left) with Ambassador Oluwole Rotimi, Nigeria's Ambassador to the United States, during an official visit to Nigeria House in Washington DC yesterday.

Pic: NAN