

### **Police Shot PDP Chieftain During Congress**

Mr. Paul Apii, a 38-year-old, father of 3 children and chairman of the Ward 4 of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), in the B-Dere, an Ogoni Community in the Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria, was shot dead by a mobile policeman deployed to the area during the PDP congress which was held throughout Nigeria.

On Saturday, November 18, 2006, at about 1.00pm, the voting materials for the PDP congress had arrived at the Divisional Police headquarters at Kpor, the headquarters of Gokana Local Government Area, amidst very tight security provided by the Nigerian Police Force (NPF). Shortly after, just at the back of the Police gate, a mobile Police Officer, a Corporal called CPL. Tijani Ahmed, with number; F/No 196707, from 41 mobile barracks at Damaturu, Yobe state with his riffle No. 531337 shot at Paul Apii at close range.

The victim, Apii who was an adviser to the Gokana Local Council on Youth Affairs had his abdomen shattered by the Police bullet. He was first taken to Tuadoh Clinic and maternity at Lewa community in the area. When the private Clinic wanted a Police order to commence treatment on the victim, and that could not be produced immediately, he was transferred to the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH) in Port Harcourt, Rivers State where he later died.

Some medical experts at the UPTH told CEHRD that but for the delays due to request for Police permit, the victim would have survived.

In Nigeria, when some one is taken to a clinic or hospital with bullet wounds, a Police permit is always requested before any treatment of the injury can be carried out. This has led to the death of several persons in the country. A Police permit is a written standing order given after police investigation into the incident and duly confirms that the victim is not an armed robber.

But doctors associations in Nigeria like The Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and others have been at the fore front of agitations against the police order that it infringes on their professional rights.

At the UPTH relatives and friends of Paul Apii produced the police report which was given by the divisional police headquarters in Kpor. Eye witnesses told CEHRD investigator that there was no problem between Paul Apii and the police officer, Tijani Ahmed who shot him dead. The police officer after the shorting was arrested and detained at Kpor, where he is still being held as at the time of this report.

During the Saturday, November 18, 2006, PDP Primaries over 8 persons were killed and vehicles burnt in various parts of Rivers State. The congress, which elected State Houses of Assembly Candidates for the PDP in 2007 election throughout the country, was marred by violence as heavily armed gangs loyal to various factions of the party engaged one another in violent confrontations in Tai, Eleme, Ogu-Bolo, Gokana, Khana, Port Harcourt and Obio-Akpor Local Government Areas of Rivers State.

The PDP Primaries was marked by protests over doctored lists of delegates for the state House of Assembly Primary election. There were also reports of bribing of security officials, Party chieftains etc. This portends bad omen for the future of Nigerian democracy.