

3 killed as Benin boils

BUSINESS activities were grounded yesterday in Benin, Edo State capital, as suspected thugs said to be loyal to a chieftain of the Action Congress (AC), allegedly shot dead three persons belonging to a rival party and injuring eight others.

This is even as the police command in the state yesterday said it lost six of its men to the robbery attack on Wednesday, while it recovered over N45 million from the bullion van that was attacked by the robbers in Benin.

Those injured during the attack by thugs included school children and women residing on Ekpeneden Street, Benin, the street that was invaded by the thugs.

In his reaction, Edo State police spokesperson, Mr. Peter Ogbol, a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), condemned the action of the party thugs and warned that the command would no longer tolerate acts of lawlessness of politicians irrespective of their status.

It would be recalled that Governor Adams Oshiomhole's administration in the state got its baptism of fire last Wednesday when the Commissioner for Environment and Public Utilities, Mr. Clem Agba, narrowly escaped death in the hands of some miscreants

•Police recover N45m from bullion van

while trying to enforce the new laws on environment and sanitation.

Eyewitness told Daily Champion that except for the timely intervention of policemen from the Oba Market Police station who forcefully dispersed the mob, Agba would have been stoned to death.

Special Adviser to the governor on Public Affairs and Strategy, Mr. Eric Osagie, condemned the attack and warned that government will not tolerate any act that might impede the peace and progress of the state.

Recently, the state government gave ultimatum to operators of illegal motor parks and owners of unapproved business centres in the city to remove such or risk having them demolished.

Yesterday's attack by irate youths began when some of them armed with various guns such as AK-47, double barrel and other assault rifles, invaded the house of one of the prominent Benin chiefs and a major transporter (names withheld) with the aim of setting it on fire.

They were said to have ransacked other surrounding houses on Ekpeneden Street, inflicting injuries on innocent women and school children.

The timely intervention of

station saved the situation.

When Daily Champion visited the Accident and Emergency Ward of the Central Hospital in Benin, victims were seen lying on the floor, while one of them said to have been shot in the stomach, was transferred to the University of Benin Teaching Hospital, (UBTH).

Agba while speaking with newsmen said there was no going back on the plans by the state government to fully enforce the environmental sanitation law in the state.

Reacting, Chief Osamede Adun, whose house was torched by the thugs expressed surprise that he became a subject of attack saying the issue of sanitation ought not to result in a personal attack on individuals.

He promised to continue to maintain peace even in the face of provocation, saying: "Edo State belongs to all of us and we must continue to work for its development and progress."

Meanwhile, Edo State police has disclosed that a total of 30 armed robbers carried out the deadly attack on Zenith Bank bullion van from which the command recovered N45million on Wednesday.