

Gunmen kill 2 policemen, 5 others in Aba

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AT least seven persons were killed by unknown gunmen at the weekend, during an attack at a Base Transmission Station (BTS) located at the Gabby Oil, Aba Road, Aba, Abia State. Also the Association of Telecommunications Companies of Nigeria (ATCON) has urged the new Inspector General of Police, Mr. Hafiz Ringim, to arrest and prosecute the gunmen.

Those killed at the incident included two petrolseal engineers, one driver, two mobile policemen, a rigger on top of the tower and the site security guard.

Daily Champion learnt the incident occurred while the personnel among others were

carrying out telecommunications maintenance at the BTS.

A BTS also known as a Base Transceiver Station (BTS) is a piece of equipment that facilitates wireless communication between user equipment (UE) and a network.

According to a report made to MTN Nigeria Communications by the Project Manager for Aba, who identified himself as simply Mr. Valentine, entitled "Incident Report at Gabby Oil AB008," a copy of which was made available to *Daily Champion* on Sunday, four gunmen stormed the BTS where the team of engineers from MTN were working on the generator, while they were waiting for the Radio Base Stations (RBS) to load and held them at gunpoint.

"While working on the

generator four gunmen walked into the BTS site while the team of engineers were waiting for the RBS to load after bringing up the generator and held them at gunpoint," he stated.

He also disclosed that the team met some engineers from Ericsson on site working on the transmission link-one.

He said trouble started when the gunmen asked for the petrolseal car key, "but apparently couldn't get it because the person with the car key went to the hood to use the toilet."

The four gunmen, he said, still holding everyone at gunpoint asked for the car key inside the BTS site and immediately the petrolseal engineer told them that the person in possession of the key went out to buy

something and knowing that mobile policemen were inside the shelter alongside the Ericsson and petrolseal staff, "the gun men felt threatened and opened fire on everyone in the BTS site. Also, they came outside and shot the rigger on top of the tower while the other Ericsson engineer and his driver hid behind the RBS units in the site, so the fired bullets missed them."

Valentine in his report stated that the armed robbers came outside the shelter and saw one of our petrolseal staff, the air-condition technician and demanded for the car key, but got the response that he was not with the car key.

"So, they collected the key that he (the technician) had on him, which was the site key- 1 Abloy and 1 CISA key," he said. According to him, the gunmen had tried to use the car which key was in their possession to run away before another gunshots were heard from afar, which turned out to be a group of mobile military men coming their way adding "so the robbers ran away."

Although there were three survivors from the BTS, attack Valentine said the second petrolseal engineer was pronounced dead on arrival at a hospital, while all the bodies had been deposited in the mortuary.

Confirming the incident to *Daily Champion*, yesterday, the Aba Police Area commander, Mr. Ebere Onyeneagorom, said he could not speak further on the incident until today, (Monday).

Reacting to the incident, the Association of Telecommunications Companies of Nigeria (ATCON), said its secretariat had received the report, describing it as "one murder too callous."

2011: Akpabio declares today

DENNIS UDOMA, Uyo

GOVERNOR Godswill Akpabio of Akwa Ibom State will declare his intention to seek re-election on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) today.

The declaration according to the organisers will hold at the Ibom Hall in Uyo, the state capital.

Meanwhile, anxiety has gripped some aspirants contesting various positions on the party's platform in the state as they have openly complained of shoddy arrangement in the sale of nomination and the declaration of intent forms by the PDP.

Daily Champion gathered that, nomination forms for the State House of Assembly cost N500,000, declaration of interest N100,000, while House of Representatives aspirants are to pay N200,000 for intent and N1million for nomination form respectively.

Those aspiring for the Senate would pay N200,000 and N2million for their intent and nomination forms.

Some of the aspirants who complained that the forms were too expensive said many aspirants may not be able to exercise their willingness to contest.

Others were scrambling to collect forms as at yesterday when our reporter visited the party secretariat along Ikot Ekpene Road, Uyo on presentation of identification or party cards and bank drafts in line with the directive of the state publicity secretary of the party, Mr. Austine Mbheh.

Meanwhile, a statement by the 'Godswill 2011 Campaign Organisation' said, the event is to be chaired by Sen. Anietie Okon and will commence by 12 noon.

The release signed by the Commissioner for Information, Mr. Aniekan Umanah, disclosed

that events scheduled for the declaration include a private solemn service by Governor Akpabio at the St. John's Chaplaincy in Government House, before proceeding to consult with the traditional rulers at the State Council of Chiefs Chambers in Uyo.

Chief Akpabio is also expected to meet with the State officials of the Peoples Democratic Party at the party's secretariat along Ikot Ekpene Road.

Governor Akpabio's declaration would be second in the state after former minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Sen. John James Akpanudoedehe declared for governorship few months ago.

The statement invited supporters of Governor Akpabio, stakeholders in the Akwa Ibom project, the media and the general public to turn out enmasse to witness the ceremony.