

# 3 killed as former minister escapes 'assassination' in Cross River

From Eyo Charles Calabar

A former minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Usani Usani, has escaped an alleged assassination attempt while three other people lost their lives during the incident.

It was learnt that the assailants killed a driver and two other occupants in another vehicle in what appeared to be a mistaken identity.

He was driving on the Calabar-Ikom federal highway on his way to Yakurr Local Government Area and was somewhere around the Biase axis when the assailants waylaid his car.

Usani, a governorship candidate of the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP), escaped, but two men, as well as a driver ahead of him, were killed.

Usani's media aide, David Agabi, who was with the former minister in his car when the incident happened, confirmed

the incident.

"We were heading towards Yakurr Local Government Area where the governorship candidate hails from, in continuation of his political activities. But around Betem community in Biase Local Government, we were waylaid by an armed gang from the opposite direction.

"They swooped on a white posh car, killing two occupants while large numbers of other passengers were abducted and taken away, alongside one Mr Egbe Eworo Essiet.

"They mistook the former minister's car, which was next to the white car, but shot the driver. Apparently, they did not quite ascertain who Usani is," Agabi said.

Calls to the commissioner of police in the state, Sule Balarabe and the command's public relations officer, Irene Ugbo in respect of the alleged assassination attempt on Usani were not responded to.