

# Gunmen kill 35-year-old truck driver in Edo

From **Alemma-Ozloruva Aliu, Benin**

**T**RAGEDY struck the family of Egbon in Aduwawa area of Benin City as a yet-to-be identified policeman on Saturday night shot and killed their 35-year-old son, Osagie, around Ikpoba Hill, in Benin City.

The shooting of the truck driver by a policeman suspected to be of the Special Protection Unit (SPU), as he was said to be putting on a blue beret, caused outrage by onlookers and passersby who immediately blocked the entire stretch of the road around Upper Mission.

The shooting was said to have hit the young man, who along with his wife, was driving against the traffic, in a heavy duty vehicle, marked DELTA 601XA, during a heavy traffic snarl caused by an accident near Ikpoba River.

The incident, which almost resulted to a breakdown of law and order, was however curtailed by the intervention of a detachment of soldiers, who arrived the scene.

The elder brother of the deceased, Efosa Egbon, told *The Guardian* that his younger brother had arrived from Lagos on Thursday and had gone to service his truck with a view to getting ready for another trip yesterday (Sunday) evening when the incident happened.

"I was told that my brother was in the truck and because of the accident that happened in Ikpoba River, there was heavy traffic on the road and everybody was driving one way. It was in the process that two policemen in blue beret accosted my brother and attempted to force him out of the road to clear the way for their principal who was suspected to have been trapped in the traffic, but along the line, we didn't know what happened between them and they said one of them dragged my brother down and shot him twice."

"The people who saw the way it happened rose to challenge the police and they started

throwing teargas canisters and live bullets into the air. They expended several canisters on people before they escaped", he said.

As at yesterday morning, the Commissioner of Police, Folusho Adebajo, was at the Central Hospital before the body was deposited at the mortuary, where he assured the family of the deceased that investigation would be conducted but appealed for calm and urged them not to take the law into their hands.

But the Edo State Police Command, in a release on Sunday, said the bullet that killed Osagie was from the weapon of an unidentified personnel from Special Protection Unit.

The command in the release signed by its Public Relations Officer, Moses Eguavoen, said it has begun investigation on the matter.

It read: "Information received by the Edo State Police Command reveals that on 01/02/2014 at about 1930hrs, one Aisagbonbuan 'm' aged 35 years, a driver in charge of

MAN Diesel truck (registration number DELTA AYB 601 XA) was shot dead by suspected unknown personnel of Police Special Protection Unit, while driving against traffic along Ikpoba Hill, on Benin-Auchi Expressroad, Benin City. Investigation is ongoing with a view to identifying and arresting the culprit."

"The command is by this medium requesting relations of the deceased person and members of the public to remain calm while investigation is in progress. So far, nothing suggests that any personnel of Edo State Police Command is responsible for the unwholesome act. The command also wishes to pledge its commitment to unravel the circumstances behind the killings. It is important to note that the venue of the offence is a gateway to other states in the country and therefore facilitated the escape of the passer-by personnel of the Special Protection Unit responsible for the act as stated by eye-witness at the scene.