

## Delta Approves N16.7b For Road Projects

By Tunke-Aye Bisina  
CORRESPONDENT, Asaba

Delta State government has earmarked the sum of N16.7 billion for various road projects in the state, of which N9 billion was approved for two road projects in riverine areas.

The Commissioner for Information, Mr Bolatsi Dudu, who briefed reporters after the state Executive Council meeting, explained that the two road projects are in communities in Warri South West Local Government Area.

According to him, one of them was the construction of roads along Ubeban-Inikorogha-Azama-New Jerusalem Zion-Oporoza-Opuedebubor-Okpeleama-Ikpokpo-Madangho at an estimated cost of N5 billion.

The main road, he explained, was 11.46 kilometres while the internal roads are about 5.2 kilometres.

The other road estimated at N4 billion would stretch from Okerenkoko to Pepe Ama and Kokodiagbene. It is 13.68 kilometres and the internal roads are 4.2 kilometres, he said.

Dudu listed other road projects approved as the construction of Old Okpe Road from Jeddo to Orhorhe Junction with a spur to Egorode at the cost of N1.2 billion; and construction of 16 km Adeje-Egbeleku Umiaghwa, Oviri Okpe Road at the cost of N2 billion.

Others are the 9.8 km Bedesegha-Assah-Etefe Road at the cost of N1.8 billion; construction of phase one of Okwagbe, Otutuama, Esaba, Ekroda, Emadaja Road put at N2 billion.

The meeting, he informed, also determined and re-awarded the contract for construction of the 8.8 km Issele-Uku/Ubulu-Uku Road at the cost of N400 million.

# Two Killed In Fulani Herdsmen, Isoko Community Clash

By Francis Onoiribholo  
CORRESPONDENT, Warri

Two persons were feared dead while scores of others were seriously injured in a bloody clash between Fulani herdsmen and indigenes of Enhwe Community in Isoko South Local Government Area of Delta State at the weekend.

This followed the alleged invasion of the community's farmland by the herdsmen.

The herdsmen, said to be in their numbers, and their cattle allegedly invaded the community, killing two indi-

genes who were said to have accused them of destroying their crops. Names of the deceased were not immediately known.

Daily Independent gathered that the herdsmen entered the community through Unenurhie community in Ughelli North Local Government Area and proceeded to other parts of Enhwe when a farmer reportedly challenged them for destroying their farmland with their animals. A scuffle was said to have broken out between the herdsmen and some farmers, with the former who were

armed with rifles and other dangerous weapon allegedly opening fire on the farmers.

By the time the news of the incident filtered into the town for the people to launch a counter-attack, the shot victims had lost much blood and could not survive.

The herdsmen were said to have immediately fled the scene, abandoning their cattle. However, a group of youths were said to have inflicted machete injury on two of them as they scampered in different directions.

Although details of the incident were still hazy at the

time of this report, sources said several indigenes of the community were injured in the fracas. But the incident resulted in an exodus of indigenes from the town, following rumours that the herdsmen were planning another round of attack on the community.

The quick intervention of the police from the Oleh police station however saved the situation, as a team of policemen moved to the town to curtail the incident.

Meanwhile, the police have arrested two of the herdsmen in connection

with the attack while another was said to be in critical condition at the Ughelli Central hospital.

When contacted, the Oleh Divisional Police Officer, Mr Gabriel Ughotor, said only one person died in the attack while the situation has been brought under control, adding that two Fulani suspects have been arrested in connection with the attack.

He said the matter has been transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Asaba for further investigation.

## Court Stops Closure Of Calabar School

By Bassey Inyang  
CORRESPONDENT, Calabar

The Federal High Court in Calabar, Cross River State, has restrained the state government from closing down Hillcrest High School located in Ekorinim in the Calabar metropolis pending the determination of the suit.

Justice A.O Ajakaiye gave the order at the weekend in Suit No. FHC/CA/CS/3/2007, following a motion *ex parte* filed by the plaintiff, Mrs Nancy Effa of Hillcrest High School.

The order restrains the defendants, who are the state Attorney-General, the Ministry of Education, the Commissioner for Education, and Mrs Mary Theresa Ikwen.

Other defendants in the suit are the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and the National Examinations Council (NECO).

Counsel to the plaintiff, Francis Esu, had prayed the court to issue the following order against the defendants: "An order of court restraining the defendants, their agents and privies in whatever manner from interfering with the running and administration of the Hillcrest High School pending the determination of the Motion on Notice."

"Any other order as the court may deem fit to make in the circumstance."

In granting the prayer of the plaintiff the presiding Judge ordered "that an Interim Order of Injunction is granted against the Defendants as prayed; that they are specifically restrained from shutting down the Applicant's school; that this is an Interim Order and it will last up to the return date unless renewed by the Court; (and) that the Applicant shall give undertaking as to damages in case it turns out that the court was misled into making the Order."

The presiding judge, who issued the order on January 26, fixed the next hearing for February 6, 2007.



Rivers State Governor, Dr Peter Odili (left), with his Imo and Akwa Ibom counterparts, Achike Udenwa (middle) and Victor Attah, at the flag-off of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Presidential campaign in Lagos...at the weekend

# Kula Crisis: Chief Alleges Death Threat

By Odudu Okpongete  
and Ubokikwan Gabriel  
(Port Harcourt)

A prominent chief in crisis-ridden Kula community in Akuku-Toru Local Government Area of Rivers State, Godknows Anabs Sara-Igbe, has raised alarm over an alleged threat to his life by youths from the community.

Sara-Igbe made the claim just as a youth leader in the community, Christian DonPedro, alleged that the cause of the crisis was misappropriation of the N230 million yearly royalties paid to the leaders and chiefs of the community by oil giants, Shell.

This claim was however faulted by another youth

## •Community Leader's Son Faults Killing Of Father

leader, Hope Opusingi, who said the recent killing of his father, Chief Dan Opusingi, and five other chiefs had nothing to do with their alleged diversion of the funds.

But Sara-Igbe pointed accusing fingers at Hope Opusingi, saying he has hired assassins to snuff life out of him (Sara-Igbe).

"The group led by Opusingi's son, Hope, has been hiring assassins to go after some other people. As you are here, they have called me several times; the boys he hired to assassinate me," he told our reporter.

The former spokesman of the key opposition political

group in the state, Rivers Democratic Movement (RDM), also claimed that two busload of assassins had been sent to look for one Chief Amabigi to kill him, adding that soon there might be nobody left in Kula.

But Hope Opusingi countered that there was no time the murdered chiefs withdrew funds accruing to the community under the existing Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMOU) without due consultation.

"GMOU fund cannot be withdrawn without the approval of representatives of the company (Shell), the state government, local government,

community representatives, NGOs (non-governmental organisations), NDDC (Niger Delta Development Commission) and the NNPC (Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation)," Opusingi said.

He maintained that the state Ministry of Chieftaincy and Community Affairs can attest to how the GMOU money is disbursed, adding that those making such claims were just trying to cover up the crime they committed.

The youth leader alleged that highly-placed persons in the community hired assassins from Elem Tobia to carry out the killings, a charge the accused community denied on

grounds that it was also bedevilled by internal crisis.

"We are aware that the guns were hired from Elem Tombia for the operations. We know them and they know us. They have also been searching for us to eliminate," he said, urging security agencies to act in the interests of justice since the killers were known.

Opusingi added that even before they were killed, the chiefs had alerted the government and the police through a letter dated January 11, 2007 of plans by some persons to eliminate them.

Soldiers, naval personnel and mobile policemen have however been deployed in the community to restore peace.