

Gunmen Kill Three Policemen In Port Harcourt

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Gunmen on Sunday night killed three policemen in the Joint Task Force (JTF) in Port Harcourt and disappeared, but the police vowed on Monday to trace them and others responsible for attacks in the city.

One of the gunmen was killed in the shoot-out between the group and the JTF.

The deaths came hours after the kidnap of an employee of Shell, Fidelis Akpoghiran, in the Rumudamaya axis of Port Harcourt.

Ironically, Rumuokoro police station is a few metres away from the scene of the kidnap, and close to the head-

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quarters of Obio/Akpor Council.

The JTF suffered a similar attack in Port Harcourt in January when gunmen struck at the Borokiri police station, sacking the station and killing seven officers.

The latest happened while policemen and other security officials were at a check point around Kaduna Street in the D-Line area.

Police Public Relations Officer, Rita Abbey, who confirmed the killing of the officers, said she is not sure if the killers were militants or robbers. According to her, there is suspicion that the killers could be the same people who robbed in Oyigbo on Sunday night.

Abbey expressed the sadness of the police over the loss of the officers, but pledged that the police would fish out the killers.

Also in the neighbouring Delta State, JTF Media Coordinator, Lt. Col. Rabe Abubakar, pledged that "we would not succumb to intimidation and threats as we are just carrying out our statutory duties to protect lives and property. The arrest we made testified to our resolution to fight the illegal oil bunkering no matter who is involved."

It was his reaction to the hijack of a vessel by militants in Escravos. Abubakar said negotiation is on to free the vessel, but could not say whether the government would yield to the demand of the militants that 22 Filipinos arrested for helping them with oil theft be released. In North Kivu province, but the violence sharply escalated in August.

The government says it is willing to meet Nkunda, but only with the many other militias in the region. Nkunda has criticised the government for signing deals with Chinese companies to exploit Congo's cobalt and copper.

Some fear the latest crisis could once again draw in neighbouring countries.

Congo's devastating 1998-2002 war split the vast nation into rival fiefdoms and involved half a dozen African armies.