

# Panic in Warri, Effurun over killings of prominent Deltans

**T**HERE was panic in Warri and Effurun in Delta State yesterday when residents learnt that the recent high-profile murders of prominent Deltans and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chieftains were carried out by assassins led by a former army officer.

The revelation came amidst fresh facts on the Monday night's murder of a PDP stalwart and hotelier, Mr. Rex Ezonfade, by uniformed gunmen.

The police command's spokesman, Banawi Ishaku (ASP), in a telephone interview with *The Nation*, confirmed Ezonfade's murder and the suspicion that his killers could be the same assassins.

He said: "We (police) are getting those feelers (of killers in military uniforms), but there are no confirmations yet. Commissioner of Police (CP) is very unhappy about this

From Shola O'Neil, Warri

ugly trend and we will liaise with the military to unravel them."

Mr. Hezekiah Dimka, the Commissioner of Police, who was also contacted by telephone told our correspondent he was at "a very crucial meeting in Abuja", yesterday.

Ezonfade, father of four daughters and Managing Director of the Broadwell Hotel, Effurun, died at the Shell Clinic, Ogonu, barely three hours after he was shot. His car, a grey Toyota Corollā (Reg. NO BE 521 KSJ), was later abandoned by his killers at Emebiren Street, Warri.

Ezonfade's killers ambushed him at the entrance of his home at the exclusive Crystal Palace Estate, located on the NNPC Complex Road, Ekpan.

A PDP chieftain and Project Monitor to the state government in Ughelli North local Government Area, Mr. Arido

Mu-oboghare, was also gunned down three weeks earlier.

Like Ezonfade, Muoboghare was killed at the entrance of his home at Mosheshe Street, Effurun, by gun-wielding men, who wore military fatigues.

Security operatives are working on the theory that the two killings could be connected. A source said it believed "that solving one of the murders could unravel the other."

A competent police source told our correspondent yesterday that preliminary investigations revealed that Monday's killing of Ezonfade was related to the Muoboghare's shooting.

Our source, said the police believed that the squad of killers was being led by a former soldier who was dismissed a few months ago.