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There was tragedy in Rivers State yesterday, as two soldiers attached to the Reynolds Construction Company (RCC) at Onne, near Port Harcourt, shot and killed a police constable, Okeke Peter.

The soldiers also shot another man, Tornubari Nnaa.

Also yesterday at Trans-Amadi Industrial Estate, Port Harcourt, miscreants shot and killed Sgt. Aroworaju Omasuyi.

Inspectors Paul Omidoh, Musiliu Fatola and Corporal Acheme Obenyengba were injured.

The officers responded to a distress call after an employee of Multimesh Communication Company, Chinyere Nwachoka, was robbed of N1.4 million.

Sources said trouble started over tipping of sand kept without permission on the road RCC was constructing.

Police spokesperson Rita Inoma-Abbey confirmed the incident.

She said: “The soldiers’ Commander Lt. Usman and the company’s Public Relations Officer (PRO) have been directed to produce the suspects.”

Inoma-Abbey said investigations were ongoing.

The PRO of the 2nd Brigade, , Bori Camp, Port Harcourt, Maj. Aminu Iliyasu, said the soldiers were legitimately posted to the scene and followed the rules of engagement, in order to save their lives.

Iliyasu said: “If such incidents happen, we will immediately launch inquiry, to find out if the soldiers were legitimately posted to the area.

“They were there to protect staff and equipment of RCC against kidnapping and vandalism.”

“The company put diversion and people were violating it. Two soldiers were attached to the engineer. The senior asked the junior to go and find out what the two men in mufti were doing in the area, in order to call them to order.

“The two plain-clothes persons were without identification. There was no way the soldiers would have known that one of them was a policeman. One of the two men grabbed the uniform of the soldier and tore it. The second man attempted to snatch the rifle of the soldier. The senior soldier had to move to the scene to rescue his colleague.

“Four more men started coming from the bush with cutlasses to attack the soldiers. Rules of engagement say that a soldier can fire his weapon, if the life of the person he is protecting or his life is in danger. The soldiers absolutely followed the rules of engagement.

“The junior soldier was still held down and struggling to breathe, while the senior soldier had to fire in the air to scare the four men who were advancing with their cutlasses, but later ran back into the bush. The soldier initially used the butt of his rifle to hit the two men to free his colleague, but they still held him.

“The four men, who initially ran into the bush, came with more men with cutlasses. The senior soldier had no choice, but to shoot the two persons, to free his junior, which forced two persons who were advancing with cutlasses, to run back into the bush. Investigation has since commenced.”

In a related development, at Danjuma Drive Junction, Peter Odili Road, Trans Amadi Industrial Estate, Port Harcourt, three hoodlums operating in a Navy blue Volkswagen Golf car, robbed an employee of Multimesh Communication Company, Chinyere Nwachoka, of N1.4 million.

Nwachoka withdrew the money from a bank. A group of miscreants attacked men of the Trans Amadi Anti-Robbery Patrol Team, who had responded to the distress call. The miscreant shot Sergeant Aroworuju Omasuyi, who died on the spot.

The miscreants also injured Inspectors Paul Omidoh, Musiliu Fatola, and Corporal Acheme Obenyengba.

Rivers police spokesperson, who also confirmed the incident, said the injured policemen were responding to treatment. He said there was no bank robbery and no weapon was taken away by the hoodlums.