

They found the place sealed on the orders of Governor Adams Oshiomhole.

The Benin Museum ground, now known as Oba Ovoranmwun Square, attracts hundreds of visitors since the government beautified the place and installed a water fountain.

Some of the fun seekers told *The Nation* yesterday that they were not aware that the governor had closed the place.

They said they came from far places just to relax at the water fountain with their families and take photographs.

The museum was sealed, following heaps of refuse that littered the place.

The governor, during an on-the-spot inspection of some projects in Benin City,

was peeved at the dirt in the place.

He ordered the arrest of the manager for illegal operation and non-maintenance of the place.

A woman found cooking on top of the fountain machine was also arrested.

The governor approved the retirement of the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Public Utilities, H. A. Ikhelowa, for dereliction of duty.

The approval for Ikhelowa's retirement was contained in a letter by the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Julius Ihonvbere.

In a January 4 letter, "the governor also approved the suspension of the Acting General Manager of the State Waste Management Board,

the Director-in-charge of Street Lights in the ministry, Ejemai Martins."

According to the letter, "their cases have been referred to the Civil Service Commission for further action."

The action followed an inspection by the governor round Benin City, where he saw heaps of refuse and people displaying wares on the walkways and roads.

During his inspection of the museum, Oshiomhole decried the heaps of refuse left by visitors.

He said the manager sublet the place for business without the government's authority.

During his inspection of the Oba Market road, Oshiomhole ordered the instant seizure of wares displayed on the walkways and the

he said: we are back to work in the New Year and I am happy that the contractors are back to work. Most of them will return fully to work after the holidays.

"I am satisfied with the quality of work and people are excited that the work is going on. You have noticed the job they are doing at the airport road and the challenge of the underground drainage and that is extremely important.

"Once the drainage is completed, flood from the adjoining streets will now drain into the primary drain which will now drain it into the river. That means flooding in this area will be a thing of the past. We are remodelling the road and creating bus stops.

"We will do more in the second term than we did in the first."

blackmail the commission into... claimed.

Man dies from snake bite

From Osagie Otabor, Benin

A PALMWINE tapper, Odion Ebode, has reportedly died from complications arising from a snake bite.

Sources said the victim climbed a palm tree at Ayogwiri community in Estako West Local Government where he was bitten by the snake.

Sources said the victim killed the snake and rode on his motor-cycle to a traditional healer at Irakhoe village for treatment. He was said to have died before treatment began.

'We'll manage Ibom Airport'

THE Akwa Ibom State Government yesterday said it would continue to manage the Ibom International Airport until the Federal Government is ready to take over its management.

The Special Adviser on Technical Matters to Governor Godswill Akpabio, Etido Inyang, said the state government would continue to raise the standard at the airport to meet customers' satisfaction.

Inyang spoke when the

Correspondents' Chapel of the Nigerian Union of Journalists hosted him in Uyo, the state capital.

He said the airport is the fastest growing facility in the country carrying over 400,000 passengers yearly.

The aide said President Goodluck Jonathan has indicated interest to work with the state towards the completion of the Maintenance, Repairs and Overhauling, (MRO) facilities at the airport.

MOSOP election controversy deepens

From Bisi Olaniyi, Port Harcourt

CONTROVERSY has continued to trail the presidential election of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni Peoples (MOSOP). The Deputy President, Fortune Chujor, has taken over as President in an acting capacity.

The newly-elected President, Legborsi Saro Pyagbara, who until his election last year, was the group's International Advocacy Officer, kicked against the decision to make Chujor the acting president.

Pyagbara could not be inaugurated at the 20th Ogoni Day on January 4 because of the petition against him.

All the elected officers were inaugurated, except Pyagbara with other elected MOSOP officers are Neenibari Dube (Secretary-General), Elvis Lebura Ikoma (Assistant Secretary-General), Legborsi Esaen (Public Relations Officer), Barine Theo (Financial Secretary) and Tambu Keaniabari (Treasurer).

Dickson signs Tourism Bill

From Isaac Ombe, Yenagoa

BAYELSA State Governor Seriake Dickson has announced his administration's readiness to establish an institute to train middle-level catering and tourism practitioners.

Dickson broke the news when he signed the tourism management bill, state emergency agency and other bills

into law in Yenagoa. The bills included the state institute of tourism, catering and hotel management bill, House of Assembly Service Commission amendment as well as the State Local Government (Amendment no 6) bills -all of 2012.

Vigilance group head killed for alleged kidnap

From Okungbowa Alwerie, Asaba

THE police at the weekend shot dead the chairman of a vigilance group in Abraka, Ethiope East Local Government Area of Delta State, Nelson Denedo.

Denedo was allegedly involved in the abduction of a worker of the State University, Abraka, Martins Denedo.

Denedo was shot when the police stormed his gang's hide-out at Eboh-Orogun in Ughelli North Local Govern-

ment, where the victim was held.

Martins, who was rescued unhurt, is an accountant at DELSU and the branch treasurer of the Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Universities (SSANU).

The victim was abducted at Abraka at 1am on January 1 while returning from church after the New Year's Eve serv-

ice. The vigilance chairman, it was gathered, engaged the police in a shootout before he was killed.

Three other suspects were arrested.

Commissioner of Police Ikechukwu Aduba said as soon as Denedo was kidnapped, a team of crack detectives was detailed to carry out the rescue mission.

He said the deceased was identified as the leader of the gang.

The police chief said the gang had been responsible for all kidnapping and robberies in Abraka and its environs.

Aduba announced the dissolution of the local security outfit area and directed the chairman of the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), the council chairman and traditional rulers to assist in selecting credible persons for inauguration as soon as possible.

Six dead, 13 injured in Delta road accident

From Okungbowa Alwerie, Asaba

SIX persons have been confirmed dead and 13 others injured in an accident involving two Toyota Hiace buses.

One of the crashed buses with registration number DT 19 B28 belonged to the Delta State-owned transport outfit. The other with registration number XC 597 WWR was identified as a commercial bus.

Sources said the crash occurred at the weekend at about 12.40pm in Urhonigbe, a boundary town between Edo and Delta states on the Agbor-Abraka Expressway.

The Unit Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Umutu-Ebe-

dei Unit Rs 5.27, Bibian Ojialor, confirmed the incident.

Ojialor, who is in-charge of Ukwuani and Ethiope East local governments, said 19 persons were involved in the crash.

Six of them, she said, died; the others were injured.

According to the Unit Commander, their remains have been deposited in a morgue. The injured are re-

ceiving treatment at the Central Hospital, Agbor.

Ojialor attributed the cause of the accident to dangerous overtaking and speeding.

She advised motorists to be very careful on the road by obeying traffic regulations, stressing the need to avoid overspeeding, overloading, dangerous overtaking and reckless driving.