

Anger, shock as suspected assassins gun down two activist lawyers on way to court in Delta

FRESH facts emerged yesterday on the killing of two human right lawyers in Isoko North Local Government Area of Delta State on Thursday.

Renowned lawyer and human rights activist, Mr Horrace Egbon Dafiogho and his junior colleague, identified as Sam Ekwajor, were shot dead along Ughelli - Ozoro road on Thursday.

A source said, "Their killers dragged them out of the Lexus car they rode in, shot them and left their lifeless remains on the road side near their car."

It was learnt that nothing was taken from the victims.

It was gathered that the duo were on their way to Ozoro, where they are defending suspects in a high profile kidnap case involving the son of a prominent politician in the state when they were killed.

It was gathered that Dafiogho and Ekwajor were billed to appear in a court in

■ Shola O'NEIL, Southsouth Regional Editor ■

Ozoro to hear the bail application for a defence witness in the case.

The witness was dramatically arrested by the police while testifying in favour of the suspects, who were standing trial for allegedly kidnapping the son of the politician.

A source close to the case, said, "We were in the court waiting for them till the afternoon. At a point, the judge couldn't wait any longer, so he ruled on the application."

"As we were there waiting, we got a report that Barrister Dafiogho had been killed. We were still there waiting when they took their corpses to the morgue."

The ugly incident has led to shock and anger among legal practitioners and the human rights community in the state.

The National Coordinator, Forum for Justice and Human Rights Defence, Mr. Oghenejabor Ikimi, told our correspon-

dent that he was stupefied by the development.

He said, "It was last night that I just heard the news and it is very surprising to me. Why would anybody kill a lawyer and an activist who spends his time defending the less-privileged in the society?"

Our correspondent gathered that prior to his death on Thursday, the legal practitioner had raised the alarm over threat on his life.

One his colleagues who spoke with The Nation, said, "He even told the judge hearing one of his cases that his life was being threatened."

Contacted, the Delta Police Public Relations Officer, Celestina Kalu, an Assistant Superintendent of Police, confirmed the report in a telephone chat with our correspondent.

She said, "We are aware of the incident. The corpses are in the mortuary and we have commenced investigation."

Varsity student arrested with toy gun, ammunition at APC rally