

Tension as gunmen attack army post in Bayelsa

THE Department of State Security (DSS), yesterday, arraigned eight persons for the murder of the Deputy Clerk of the Bayelsa State House of Assembly, Mr. Joseph Nemina.

The DSS, led by its new state Director, Mr. Ade Olusesan, began the prosecution of Timmy Owokoro, Tony Wilson, Omoyo Agidi and Etete Wisdom, at the state High Court 2 for the actual murder of Nemina.

But Douglas Esegi, Peace Benjamin, Benike Tarila and Enyia Ben Karibo were arraigned in the same court on a three-count charge of illegal possession of firearms allegedly used in the gruesome murder of the victim.

The offences were said to be contrary to Section

• Kill guard, cart away arms, ammunition

■ Mike ODIEGWU, Yenagoa ■

147 of the Criminal Code Laws of Bayelsa State, 2006 and Section 3 of the Robbery and Firearms (special provision) Act, 2004.

Esegi, Benjamin, Tarila and Karibo were said to be in illegal possession of locally-made six-round revolver pistol and locally-made single barrel long gun.

Nemina was killed in April along Agudiama Road, Yaenagoa, the state capital, at about 7:30pm.

While some said he was caught up in a cross-fire between two rival cult groups, others said he was approached in front of his wife's shop and shot by the gunmen.

The victim was said to be full of life when he was killed near a supermarket owned by his wife.

When the charges were read to the suspects before the court presided over by Justice Margaret Akpomimie, they pleaded not guilty.

Civilian guard killed during attack

Mike Odiegwu, Yenagoa

There was tension in Bayelsa State yesterday following an attack on an army post at Kolo Creek, Ogbia Local Government Area of the state by unknown gunmen.

The military post is primarily stationed in the area to guard an oil field operated by Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC).

The gunmen, who operated in a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV), were said to have stormed the post, carting away arms and ammunition.

A civilian guard working at the facility was said to have been shot dead by the bandits. A security source who spoke in confidence said it was still a mystery how the gunmen stole the weapons.

"What we learnt was that the gunmen, who rode on an SUV, stopped close to the army post, walked majestically into the post and dismantled the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG). They took the GPMG and other rifle and ammunition, entered their vehicle and zoomed off."

He said the gunmen may have killed the civilian guard on a suspicion that he recognised them.

"We are still trying to know what happened to the soldiers. It was either they were asleep or that they were overpowered by the gunmen. The inci-

dent happened at about 5:30am. You know election is also around the corner," he said.

It was learnt that the incident has heightened fears of violence ahead of the governorship election scheduled to hold on December 5.

The All Progressive Congress (APC) and its candidate, Chief Timipre Sylva, and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and its candidate, Chief Seriake Dickson, are the main rivals in the poll.

The corpse of the deceased, identified as Mr. Austin Igwe, was reportedly evacuated by policemen from Ogbia Division and soldiers of Operation Pulo Shield (OPS) and was later deposited in a mortuary.

Confirming the incident, the Chairman, Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), Ogbia Clan, Mr. Osanya B. Osanya, condemned the attack.

He called on security agencies to be vigilant, especially in view of the coming elections in the state.

He said some politicians were desperate and could do anything, including sponsoring violence and bloodshed to win the election.

"The leadership under my watch will, as a matter of importance, partner with the security agencies to rid our area of criminality. We also advise our youths to be at alert and not to allow some politicians to use them as willing tools to destroy our council," he said.

The Spokesman of OPS, Lt-Col Isa Ado, could not be reached for his comment.

Six kidnap suspects arrested in Delta

■ Polycarp OROSEWOTU, Ughelli ■

A suspected six-man kidnap gang and a 22-year-old member of a vigilance group, the Agbarha-Otor Vigilance group, have been arrested by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State.

The vigilance group member was said to have just been released from prison over a related offence.

According to a source from a member of the anti-robbery squad, the names of those arrested are: Clement Robin, Ovie Kupa, Kojo Emuobonuvie, Omamuyovwi John while a 6th suspect identified as Ruona escaped in an at-

tempt to arrest him.

The source had said that the suspects were arrested by the SARS on patrol along Ewwereni and Ughelli axis of the East West road while on a trip to Ughelli in a Toyota Sienna car with registration number, Lagos, AAA 619 BZ.

One of the suspects had confessed to have moved from Uwheru where they converged and prepared themselves with charms in a mission to kidnap the brother of one of the gang's members.

When contacted, the Delta State Police Spokesperson, Celestina Kalu said that investigation was already ongoing.

