

'NYSC member killed for not surrendering phone'

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Fresh facts emerged yesterday that the slain member of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Bayelsa State, James Onuh, was killed for allegedly refusing to surrender his mobile phone.

Suspected cultists at the weekend killed Onuh at Obele, a suburb of Yenagoa, the state capital.

The hoodlums reportedly fled the area after sporadic gunshots that caused panic among the residents.

The late Onuh, a graduate of the Federal University of Agriculture in Markurdi, the Benue State capital, was attached to the Bayelsa State Ministry of Works for his primary assignment.

A friend of the late Onuh, who identified himself simply as Daniel, said the deceased was a "Batch B" corps member who was expecting his passing out in September.

Giving insight into the circumstances that led to Onuh's death, Daniel said his friend boarded a commercial tricycle to Obele.

He said the corps member did not know that the other occupants were cultists prowling the roads to rob people.

Daniel said: "When he got to Obele junction, where he wanted to alight, they confronted him, asking him to hand over his mobile handset. He resisted them. Maybe he didn't know they were armed. As they were dragging the phone, one of them pulled out a gun and shot him."

He said the hoodlums took the handset and fled, adding that Onuh was rushed to the hospital, where he died.

He lamented that Onuh who hailed from Benue State was the only son of his parents.

Investigations revealed that the gruesome murder of Onuh shocked many corps members in the state and was a dominant topic of discussion among them.

There has been increased in violent crime among the youths in the state following economic hardship blamed partly on the inability of the state government to pay arrears of salaries owed different categories of workers.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Mr. Asinim Butswat, said the police were following a lead to arrest the killers of Onuh.

He said the police were committed to the security of corps members and appealed to them to go about their normal business without fear.