

# Riot in Bayelsa as policeman kills driver

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## ***From Mike Odiegwu, Yenagoa***

- ***Two passengers injured***
- ***Fleeing cop nabbed***

Riot on Monday broke out in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, following the shooting of a commercial driver and two of his passengers by a policeman.

The policeman, guarding a new generation bank at the Ekeki axis of Yenagoa, was said to have opened fire on a commercial bus belonging to Peace Mass, a popular transport company in Yenagoa.

The yet-to-be-identified police operative reportedly boarded a commercial tricycle and escaped the scene shortly after wreaking havoc in the area.

It was learnt that the bullet, which was shot at close range, pierced through the driver's head and hit two passengers, including a youth believed to be a member of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).

The incident occurred opposite a Peace Mass terminus while the driver was trying to let his passengers disembark from his bus before making a detour to enter the terminus.

Trouble started when the policeman got enraged because the driver stopped the bus in front of the bank.

An eyewitness described the shooting "as totally unnecessary", saying the driver was still behind the wheel of his vehicle when the policeman released the shot.

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"We were just in front of here when the policeman started the argument that led to the shooting", the source, who spoke in confidence, said.

He added: "The argument was unnecessary because the driver was just trying to allow his passengers disembark from the bus. I heard the driver telling the policeman that he would soon leave the place. But before we knew what was happening, the policeman cocked his gun and shot at him.

"He was lifeless. The bullet hit two other passengers, who were lying unconscious. It was an ugly sight. But the policeman immediately boarded a commercial tricycle and ran away.

"There are about three policemen guarding the bank, but this particular one has been troublesome. He is always aggressive and is usually harassing and extorting commercial tricycle operators here.

"It is very disheartening. The bus came from Onitsha in Anambra State without problems, only for this ugly incident to happen at its destination."

The source, however, said that angry youths started a riot to protest the killing and in the process destroyed part of the bank.

It was learnt that the police deployed a patrol van to stop the escalation of the riot.

Police spokesman Asinim Butswat said that the policeman had been arrested and taken to the Criminal Investigation Department.

He said the full report of the incident and the circumstances surrounding it would be made public soon