

Masters in Industrial and Labour Relations from the University of Ibadan.

He was an Assistant

Meanwhile, Oyo State House of Assembly will, as from Thursday, January 9, 2014, commence the

tem Adenaike, said his command had arrested 14 suspects in connection with the incidence. He said the suspects were currently

disputes in the community as he was fond of removing village heads at will and replacing them with his favorites and appealed to the

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# 5 killed in cult shootout in Rivers

**BOLAJI OGUNDELE - PORT HARCOURT**

NO fewer than five persons were reported killed and many others injured when suspected cultists went on a shooting spree on the streets of Diobu area of Port Harcourt on Monday night.

Nigerian Tribune gathered that the armed men, about six in number, were shooting as they passed through streets, creating panic and leaving people in pools of blood.

According to sources, streets where casualties were recorded included Azikiwe, Adelabu, School Road and Chigbu.

It was gathered that the gunmen were fleeing from a robbery operation, when they clashed with policemen along Azikiwe Street at about 11.15 p.m.

According to sources, the victims, especially those that died at one of the brothels located along Azikiwe Street, might have been hit by stray bullets, as the hoodlums shot sporadically.

A source, who spoke under conditions of anonymity, said the movement of the armed men was likable to that of a fleeing armed robbery gang, but that there was no report or sign of prior armed robbery incident anywhere in the Diobu area that

could have supported the theory.

"The way the hoodlums moved, passing through different streets, was like they were trying to escape from a robbery operation, but there has been no confirmed robbery case in Diobu from last night. That is why we have chosen to believe they were cultists who just wanted to sow fear in the heart of the people here. Cult activities have risen in the past few months in Port Harcourt so they could be another group trying to ascertain their dominance in this area," the source said.

Efforts to get the spokesman of the Rivers police command, Ahmad Muhammed (DSP), to respond was unsuccessful as he could not be reached on phone.

Meanwhile, the Rivers police command has said it stands by its claim that the embattled leader of the Rivers State House of Assembly, Chidi Lloyd, was trying to run away from justice when he was arrested.

A statement issued by the spokesman of the Rivers police command, Muhammed, posed questions around the movement of the lawmaker from the moment the accident happened.

"It will also interest the public to know that soon after the Area Commander in

charge of Port Harcourt Metropolitan, ACP Aliyu Garba visited Hon. Chidi Lloyd at the Morning Star Hospital at the break of the day, to commiserate with him and see the extent of injuries, he sustained, the lawmaker relocated from there to Kesley Harrison Hospital, Diobu.

"When this was discovered, it thus became obvious that there was much than meets the eyes hence further investigation into the cir-

cumstances surrounding the so called accident, leading to the posting of plain-clothe Policemen to guard the lawmaker.

"Surprisingly, same lawmaker to whom Policemen had been posted to guard was smuggled out of the Kesley Harrison Hospital through the back door. Does that not send a message?"

"Once beaten", they say "twice shy," Muhammed said.

## 500 undergo free cataract surgery in N/East

**SALIU GBADAMOSI - BAUCHI**

SURGICAL operations commenced on Tuesday on about 500 patients suffering from cataract in the North-East geopolitical zone of the country screened to benefit from a free medical programme, tagged "Operation Goodluck Jonathan Restore Sight."

The programme, holding at the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital (ATBUTH), Bauchi, according to the Chief Consultant Ophthalmologist, ATBUTH, Dr Abdul Mohammed Mahdi, was being carried out to reduce cases of blindness in the country, adding that it

was also aimed at helping people who could not afford to pay for eye surgeries.

Mahdi, who is the Zonal Coordinator, Operation Goodluck Jonathan Restore Sight, informed journalists that cataract was the commonest cause of blindness, submitting that most people who lost their sight did so due to poverty.

"Cataract is a common cause of blindness. It is aged-related and can also be caused by diabetes," he said. Most times, people who lost their sight are also poor and can't afford to pay for normal surgery. The operation is another way of reaching out to the poor," he added.