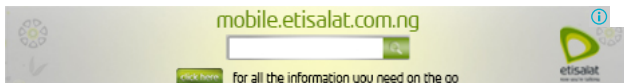


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Gunmen kill 7 policemen in Rivers, Delta (/gunmen-kill-7-policemen-in-rivers-delta)

May 9, 2016

Written by: Dapo Falade and Ebenezer Adurokiya

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Five policemen, including a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), were killed in a shoot-out with some gunmen in Okobe, Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State, on Monday.

This was just as two policemen were, also on Monday, shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Warri, Delta State.

The five slain policemen, including DSP Nasiru Halidu, were said to be heading towards 30 PMF (Police Mobile Force) in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, at the end of their special mission in Yobe State, when they were ambushed by the hoodlums at about 3.00a.m. The hoodlums were said to have caught the policemen unawares, killing all of them in a police van, in an operation that did not last more than 10 minutes.

A conductor attached to one of the tanker drivers who usually sleep over in Okobe, in the course of their journey, was also said to have been hit by a stray bullet. "One of my course mates, a DSP; his name is Nasiru Halidu, was among those ambushed and killed by the hoodlums. He was among the police officers and men who went on a special duty in Yobe State.

"They were going back to Yenagoa after ending their special assignment. It was at Okobe in Ahoada West, on the East-West Road, that the incident happened," a police source said.

As expected, the incident caused pandemonium, as members of the community took to their heels to avoid possible arrest by the police.

Rivers State Police Public Relations Officer, Ahmad Muhammad, confirmed the incident, but he was silent on the number of casualties.

Ahmad also acknowledged that the hoodlums laid ambush for the policemen who were travelling to Yenagoa.

He explained that the attack occurred in the early hours of Monday, adding that all the policemen, who were occupants of the van, died.

The Rivers PPRO, however, dismissed claims in some quarters that the policemen were involved in a shoot-out with some members of a cult group, as he said the policemen were not attached to the state police command.

"It is not true that they (the slain policemen) were involved in a shoot-out with cult members. The truth is that they were coming from Yobe State, after their special assignment and they were ambushed in Okobe, Ahoda West Local Government Area of the state.

"They (the slain policemen) were from 30 PMF and were going back to their base in Yenagoa, when the incident happened. It has nothing to do with any shoot-out," he added.

The two policemen, who were killed in Warri, were said to be dressed in mufti and had gone to a bank to withdraw some money.

They were shot dead at the Airport Junction roundabout, at about 1:00p.m.

Nigerian Tribune gathered that the victims had stopped over by a roadside mobile phones retailer kiosk to make some purchases.

A witness, one Mr Ahmed, said: "The two guys stood over there, pricing phones, but all of a sudden, a vehicle pulled up behind them and some guys, about two of them, came out of the vehicle and opened fire on the two of them.

"The killers zoomed off as soon as they had brought their targets down. It was like they trailed them to that point.

We later realised that they were MOPOL men because we saw the ID card of the dead victim."

Delta State command's PPRO, Celestina Kalu, when contacted, said the victims were mobile policemen from 27 PMF, Katsina and were attached to the Joint Task Force (JTF) in Warri.

She gave their names as Corporal Usman Ango and Corporal Usman Adamu, but described the incident as robbery.

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