

Bandits attack Rivers Govt vehicle, kill two

**Soni Daniel,
Port Harcourt**

THE menace of armed robbers continued unabated on the Ogoni-Uyo-Eket Road on Wednesday, with the killing of two men in the official vehicle of Rivers State Government.

Although the identities of the slain men were sketchy at press time, the State Police Command confirmed their

deaths and said their corpses had been deposited in a government-owned morgue in Port Harcourt.

Eyewitnesses said the victims were returning from Akwa Ibom to Port Harcourt when the robbers attacked them at Okpoko in Khana Local Government Area of the State.

It was learnt that the two men were travelling in a Rivers Government House air-

conditioned bus marked 1 RSG 597 when five armed men emerged from the bush and opened fire on them.

The identity of the occupants of the vehicle were yet to be ascertained.

"Two of them died on the spot while many others were wounded," a source said on Thursday.

One of the victims was identified as Briggs Victor while the name of the other was given as Jamine, a senior apostle with one of the Pentecostal churches in the state.

On Sunday, armed robbers had attacked the President of the Taabaa Youth Council, Mr. Matins Teba at Luwa and made away with his money and other valuables.

Teba and his friend were however spared by the robbers, who were armed with AK-47 rifles.

The road has become very unsafe for motorists lately because of the inability of the police to dislodge the robbers.

Drivers and commuters on the road complained that the police merely confined themselves to roadblocks close to Port Harcourt and Bori, the headquarters of the Khana Local Government Area and leave the more dangerous and lonely portions close to Eket and Uyo to the robbers.

Most of the robberies take place between Bori and the Imo River Bridge, near Akwa Ibom.

Police Public Relations Officer for the State, Mrs. Ireju Barasua, said that the police could not do much in checking the robbers without the support of the natives of the communities on the route.

Work resumes on Uniport library

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Port Harcourt**

WORK is to resume on the multi-million University of Port Harcourt Library complex, which was abandoned decades ago.

The construction of the facility started in 1982 but was abandoned due to lack of funds.

It was learnt that the contractors could not be paid because the money released by the Federal Government for the job was trapped in one of the banks that could not meet the N25bn minimum capital base.

The amount is said to have been in excess of N300m.

However, following the successful take-over of the failed bank by a third generation financial institution with branches in all parts of Nigeria, there were indications that the latter had undertaken to pay the amount to the contractors.

The contractor handling the job met with the university's Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Don

Baridam, on Thursday and said he was ready to return to the site with a view to completing the job.

The Managing Director of Megastar, the company handling the job, Ambassador Harcourt Aduke, said at the meeting that the firm would deliver the building as soon as possible.

Aduke said, "As I speak to you, all necessary papers have been raised and we are here to receive formal mandate of the university management to enable us access our money and return to the site as soon as possible."

Baridam in turn expressed satisfaction with the decision of the company to return to site and complete the project, which he described as a very important part of his administration's integrated plan to lift the university out of its infrastructural deficiency.

Baridam noted, "The quality of research and teaching cannot be fully achieved without a well-equipped library building such as we are struggling to put up."