

Commissioner escapes death, loses police orderly to assassins

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The spate of violent attacks intensified in Rivers State on Friday night when suspected assassins struck in the palatial home of the State Finance Commissioner, Mr. Kenneth Kobani in a bid to eliminate the politician.

But sources said the four-man armed gang missed the commissioner and killed one of the riot policemen on duty in Kobani's residence, which is very close to a popular hotel in the state.

Police sources which spoke on condition of anonymity told Sunday Punch that the gunmen arrived the commissioner's residence about 9 pm and started shooting sporadically to scare the security men attached to him.

The suspected assassins reportedly fired at the riot policemen guarding the house on Birabi Street and wanted to gain access to the main building but were repelled by other riot policemen on duty at the time.

As the gunshots were fired from different directions, Kobani, who was recreating in one of his swimming pools reportedly ran out of the pool and hid himself in one of the inner rooms in the big compound.

But the daring gunmen killed one of the riot policemen and went away with one of their members who was felled by the security men in Kobani's residence to avoid being identified.

A source who claimed to have witnessed the attack said, "The gunmen

who arrived here in a Jetty saloon car opened fire at the men sitting outside the gate of the commissioner's house. They killed a policeman who was sitting outside with the other people and took away his gun."

The Rivers State Commissioner of Police, Felix Ogbaudu, confirmed the attack on the commissioner's residence but said he was not hurt.

The commissioner escaped death last year when suspected killers threw dynamite on his residence but he was not hurt.

Kobani was also detained last year for some weeks for the riot which broke out between some groups in his Bodo community which is currently involved in a violent clash with their Mohgo neighbours.