

# Gunmen kill policeman, driver in Port Harcourt

**Ibanga Isine and  
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**G**UNMEN on Sunday killed a policeman, a driver and abducted an 11-year-old boy, Master Chidi Nzerim, on Airport Road, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The incident occurred barely a few hours after Mrs. Patricia Asita, the wife of a member of the House of Representatives, Mr. Honourable Asita, was abducted while going to church.

Nzerim is the son of Mr. Chidi Nzerim, the Managing Director of an oil and gas firm, DMS Limited, located in Onne Oil and Gas Free Zone.

A top security official told our correspondent that the boy's mother had gone with the slain driver and the police aide to drop off Chidi at the Brookstone International School, Igrwuta-Ali, when the hoodlums attacked them.

The source said that the hoodlums might have trailed the Nzerims for a long time until the opportunity came and they opened fire on the armed policeman who sat on the

passenger's seat.

The bandits, the source said, also shot the driver of the car, while he struggled to flee with his boss' wife and child.

He said, "Apparently, to stop the mother from struggling with them, the gunmen shot her on the arm just as the car screeched to a stop. The gunmen rushed at the vehicle, opened the door and dragged the little boy away.

"At that time, the policeman had died and the driver was gasping for breath. The mother was still shouting for help when they took the boy to their waiting vehicle and fled the scene."

When contacted on the telephone, the spokeswoman for the Rivers State Police command, Mrs. Ireju Barasua, confirmed the incident.

Barasua said the police had begun a search for the two persons, who were abducted in the two separate attacks.

She confirmed that both the policeman and the driver that travelled with the wife and son of the oil and gas magnate were dead.

The spokesman for the Joint Task Force on the Niger Delta,

Lt.-Col. Sagir Musa, also confirmed the incident. He noted that the vehicle might have been tailed to the point of the attack.

Musa, however, maintained that the mother of the boy was immediately rushed to an undisclosed private hospital for treatment. He added that the woman was responding to treatment.

Meanwhile, a 73-year-old industrialist, who is also a philanthropist based in Akure, the Ondo State capital, Chief Joshua Fagbola, has died following injuries he sustained in an attack by some gunmen at his residence.

The gunmen, it was gathered, hit the old man with heavy objects thereby inflicting deep cuts on his head.

The deceased, who was the owner of a popular sachet water factory in Akure, was in coma until he died on Friday.

Our correspondent, who visited the residence of the deceased on FUTA Road on Monday, learnt that a relative of the man, known as Wale, also died after the attack.

Another relative of the late Fagbola, Kayode Fagbola, 48, told journalists that the gunmen, numbering about seven, stormed the residence at the early hours of Monday, March 31.

He said that while Wale died on Tuesday at the University Teaching Hospital, Ibadan, Fagbola, who had been in coma since the attack, died on Friday at the same hospital.

According to him, the gunmen scaled the fence and entered into the house through the back door.

He alleged that some ladies who were on duty at the sachet water factory in the same compound, were raped by the suspected assassins.

The operation, according to him, lasted from about 1am to 5am.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Mr. Adeniran Aremu, confirmed to our correspondent on the telephone that the incident had been reported to the police.

He said that the case was still under investigation but no arrest had been made.