

gang at a smoking joint in Okokomaiko.

in the first operation. I was convicted in 2014 for stealing

me to go into robbery," he added.

hospital refused access to her.

# Final year student killed as two cults clash

Simon Utebor, Yenagoa

**M**R. Diete Rufus, a 24-year-old final year Business Administration student of the Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro, has been killed in Bayelsa State.

Rufus was reportedly killed in crossfire during a bloody clash between two rival cult on Sunday.

It was learnt that three other persons also sustained injuries in the incident which occurred in Okpotuwari and Ondewari communities, in the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Community sources said the incident caused panic and forced many residents to flee into the creeks for safety.

Rufus was first rushed to Korokorosei Hospital, where he was later referred to the Federal Medical Centre, Yenagoa, but died on the way to the Federal Government's health facility.

It was also learnt that the gun duel might not be unconnected with alleged disagreement over the control of security of oil wells in the area, which had generated bitterness among youths in recent times.

Meanwhile, one Ebikeseye Abiri, a younger brother of the detained publisher of a local tabloid in Bayelsa, Jones Abiri, from Okpotuwari and Ondewari communities, has been reported dead.

Jones, believed to be the breadwinner of his family, was

arrested on July 21, 2016 in his Yenagoa office and has since been in the custody of the Department of the State Services without trial.

Ebikeseye, a 30-year-old father of three children, was said to have died on Saturday in a medical facility at Akaba, following a fire incident which occurred while he was moving a container of locally-refined petroleum product from one location to another in a community in Rivers State.

Concerned members of the communities said late Ebikeseye, whose wife gave birth to a baby on Saturday, was forced to go into the trade to make ends meet following the long absence of Jones.

A community source, who wished not to be named, said, "If Jones were around, this unfortunate incident wouldn't have happened. Jones used to assist his brother in the area of children's education and other things.

"Since Jones has been arrested, things became tough and Ebikeseye had to make extra efforts in an attempt to bridge the gap."

The source called for the unconditional release of Jones on humanitarian grounds to enable him to take care of his aged mother and the family.

Calls to the spokesman for the Bayelsa State Police Command, Mr. Asinim Butswat, to get confirmation to the two incidents proved abortive as his mobile phone failed to connect.