

Suspected cultists kill Edo

Adeyinka Adedipe, Benin

A broadcast journalist with the Independent Television and Radio, Hillary Nosa Odia, has been shot dead by suspected cultists around 2nd East Circular, Benin City, Edo State capital on Christmas Eve.

A colleague of the deceased who spoke with PUNCH Metro said the late Odia left the office at about 4pm on Sunday while the news of his death filtered into the ITV premises later in the night to the surprise of those who worked with him that day.

The colleague stated that the killing was as a result of cult clashes around Esigie area, off East Circular Road.

He noted the deceased's brother was also killed in a similar fashion last year, stating that three people were also shot on the day Odia was killed.

He described the late

broadcaster as jovial, hardworking and easy to work with while calling on the police to unravel his death and apprehend the suspects.

The source said, "The late Odia closed from work at 4pm on December 24. Unfortunately, we heard of his death around Esigie hours later and it was a very big shock to the staff of the ITV."

"His brother was also killed in a similar fashion last year and I heard that the December 24 killing was due to cult clashes. He was a jovial person, easy to work with, hardworking. I hope the police will apprehend his killers soon."

"I also heard that he was trying to quit his own house at Upper Mission Extension and rent an apartment along Airport Road, while he also wrote an exam on Saturday morning at Edo State Polytechnic in Usen, where



• The late TV broadcaster

he was taking a course," the source added.

However, the Nigeria

Union of Journalists Edo State Council has commiserated with th

has been arrested by the Command for allegedly stealing four solar panels in the Ikosi area of the state on Monday.

Hundeyin added that the suspect was one of the technicians contracted to install the

panels were stolen. "The police were informed

broadcaster on Christmas Eve

management and staff of ITV over the death of Odia.

A statement signed by the Chairman of the NUJ in Edo State, Comrade Festus Alenke, and the Secretary, Andy Egbon, said the union charged security agencies in the state, especially the Nigeria Police to unravel the circumstances surrounding Odia's murder.

The statement prayed for the repose of the soul of the fallen colleague and urged his family to take solace in the fact that Odia would be remembered on the positive side of history.

The statement further charged journalists to investigate the incident of Odia's death and as well ensure adequate reportage of the killing.

The PPRO of the Edo State Police Command, Chidiebube

promising to give details of the incident on Tuesday.

When asked if he knew whether the deceased had reported a threat to his life,

he said he wouldn't know as there were many cases treated by the men of the command daily.

He added: "I can confirm

that the killing took place. Information is sketchy now but details would be revealed tomorrow after preliminary investigation."

Fun-seeker drowns in Lagos beach

Dayo Oyewo

A 29-year-old fun-seeker identified simply as Francis has drowned while swimming at the Pop Beach Club in the Amuwo Odofin Local Government Area of Lagos State.

PUNCH Metro learnt that the incident happened on Thursday at about 12pm while the victim was holding a birthday hangout with his friends.

It was gathered that the late Francis and three others left their colleagues while the celebration was going on and went to the sea to swim.

"After they searched for the remaining one and could not find him, the management went to the police station to report the incident. By the time a team of police arrived, the management had also gone to hire local divers who came to begin another round of search for the missing person. The search lasted till the evening but he was not found," the eyewitness added.

PUNCH Metro, however, gathered that the remains of the deceased were later found

on Saturday.

A police source in the community said, "His body was washed to the shore of the sea on Saturday morning. And immediately people saw it, they alerted the management."

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Benjamin Hundeyin, confirmed the incident.

He said, "It happened. The body was recovered two days after the incident and the corpse has been deposited in the morgue."

Police rescue Abia missing children.