

# Probe begins as police recover expatriate's body in Rivers

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| By Dennis Naku

 Map of Rivers State

The Rivers State Police Command has begun a probe into the circumstances surrounding the death of an expatriate and Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Rivers State Cassava Project Limited, Mr. Gibson Reuben, whose vehicle skidded off a bridge and plunged into the river underneath while trying to escape from kidnappers in Aleto in Eleme Local Government Area of the state.

*PUNCH Metro* reports that suspected kidnappers had on Monday night blocked the Hilux vehicle in which Reuben, who drove himself, was in along with a security detail but in an attempt to escape lost control and crashed into the river.

Following the incident, a search team was immediately mobilised by the Chairman of Eleme Local Government Area, Brain Gokpa, while the police swung into action only to discover the expatriate's remains on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the State Commissioner of Police, Olugbenga Adepaju, has ordered a full-scale investigation into the incident, saying the perpetrators must be fished and prosecuted.

The spokesperson for the state police command, Grace Iringe-Koko, confirmed the recovery of the lifeless body of the Dutch national in a statement issued on Tuesday evening.

Iringe-Koko, who described the attack on the expatriate as ‘gruesome’, said as the incident occurred, his security attaché escaped but Reuben and the Hilux van he drove skidded off the road and submerged in the river till Tuesday afternoon when his remains and the automobile were pulled out.

Our correspondent reports that some travellers, motorists and other road users watched with bated breath as the remains of Reuben were pulled out.

The statement read, “The Commissioner of Police, Rivers State Police Command, Olugbenga Adepoju, has visited the scene of a gruesome attack on the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Rivers State Cassava Project Limited, Mr. Gibson Reuben, an expatriate from the Netherlands.

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“The incident occurred on Monday, January 13, 2025, at about 2030hrs. at the Aleto Eleme Bridge, where unknown gunmen ambushed Reuben’s vehicle, causing him to lose control and crash into the river.

“Fortunately, the Mobile Police personnel accompanying Reuben managed to escape, but he and the Hilux Van were still submerged in the water.

“A search party led by the command’s Marine Unit was constituted to rescue the expatriate, who was also the driver of the Hilux van.

“The search party’s efforts resulted in the recovery of the lifeless body of the expatriate, Mr. Gibson Reuben and the White colour Toyota Hilux van. The recovery of the body and vehicle brings a somber end to the rescue efforts.

“CP Olugbenga A. Adepoju was accompanied by the Area Commander Eleme, Divisional Police Officers within the Eleme Area Command and tactical teams of the command already at the scenes.”

Speaking, Adepoju condemned the attack on the Dutch national, describing it as “very barbaric” and has ordered a full scale investigation with immediate arrest of the perpetrators of this reprehensible act, vowing to bring them to justice.

The state police image maker added, “This incident is a disturbing situation and the Police Commissioner’s swift response is a welcome step towards addressing these concerns.