

Hoodlums rob, shoot policeman to death in Bayelsa

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By Samuel Ese

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A policeman, Obot Godwin, was killed at about 6.00am on Tuesday in the Amarata area of Yenagoa when he went to buy some medicine, *PUNCH Metro* has gathered.

Obot was robbed of his phone and was pleading with the thieves to return the phone to him when he was shot in the head, leading to his instant death.

Our correspondent also gathered that following the killing, policemen swooped on the area around OMPADEC Street and environs, breaking into houses, carrying out indiscriminate arrests, and firing into the air.

Apart from the indiscriminate arrest of innocent folks and destruction of houses, *PUNCH Metro* learnt that residents, including schoolchildren, were tear-gassed.

Residents told our correspondent in separate interviews that Amarata, one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the Yenagoa area, has been witnessing violent crimes for some time, but the security agencies failed to act until the killing of Obot.

It was further gathered that some residents have fled the area over the police action while traders have locked up their shops and families have shut their doors.

A resident who did not want his name mentioned said: “Windows were smashed during the raid, and the community has been left in fear of further violence.”

Another resident, a tailor, said, “I am tired. Every time, we continue to run. This morning we started running again. They just killed somebody. The area is also known for clashes between rival cult groups.

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“Even the chief has been arrested. They have threatened to return in the evening and arrest people. We don’t know what to do.”

Two residents of the area, a broadcaster with Radio Bayelsa in Yenagoa, Priye Julius, told PUNCH Metro that he witnessed the incident.

Julius said, “It’s true. I am still at home,” and on the situation on the ground as of noon, he said, “The place is calm now.”

Another resident said, “Two people were forcefully taken away from my mini estate, a businessman whose wife works in the bank and another young man who works with Bayelsa Park. Houses were broken into by the police, and men and women taken into custody by force.”

There is growing fear that the development can lead to a wider breakdown of law and order in Yenagoa.

When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer of the state command, Musa Mohammed, confirmed the incident, describing it as a “serious matter.”

