

Two die mysteriously in Imo hotel

Uche Onyema, Owerri

Residents of Edede, Owerri in Imo State on Friday woke up to behold the mysterious death of two staffers of Home Best Hotel who died in their sleep in the same room.

An eyewitness who narrated the incident to *Saturday PUNCH* disclosed that one of the deceased, Chima Nnadi (25), a part time student of the Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, Owerri, who hails from Enyigugu, Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area, had soaked his clothes for washing before putting off a generating set that has been running close to their room at about 11: 39 pm.

The witness stressed that Chima

afterwards retired into the room where Chukwunonso Ebubealo, who was about 29 years old, a native of Awka in Anambra State was already asleep.

But unfortunately, both men never saw the light of the day as they were found dead by another staff of the hotel who forced the door of their room open on the instruction of the hotel manager simply known as Ngozi after both men were not seen at their duty post at about 9am the next morning.

The Chief vigilante of the area, Anayo Adiele, said that both deceased employees had a good relationship and dismissed any allegation of both taken their own lives.

However, there are speculations in the area that both men might have been poisoned. One of the resident, who decline his identity, said "I don't think they died of any generator fume, they put off the generator before going to bed, I think both of them might have been poisoned from the last meal they ate that night."

When contacted, the state Police Public Relation Officer, Andrew Enwerem, maintained that he had yet to be briefed officially on the tragic incident.

The corpses of the young men have since been deposited at the Federal Medical Centre, Owerri for autopsy.

Arepo residents petition NNPC over fuel theft

Kunle Falayi

Residents of Arepo in Obafemi Owode Local Government Area of Ogun State, have called on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation to destroy shanties constructed by oil thieves in the area.

In a petition obtained by our correspondent on Friday, the residents through their lawyer, Olufemi Okunowo, said oil thieves use the shanties to sell illegally procured petroleum products.

The residents said they had taken steps such as engaging private security to secure

the area as a result of the illegal activities taking place in Arepo, but that the NNPC needed to also take action.

The petition reads, "These shanties are used amongst others, as storing places for stolen fuel and are usually disguised as beer parlours, block-making factories and welder's shop.

"These beer parlours have become a gathering point for miscreants. The block-making factories are situated right on top of the petroleum pipelines."

The residents said they had expended millions on naira on road rehabilitation and

maintenance in the area, adding that efforts to further secure the area had been thwarted by some individuals who described themselves as landowners.

The residents said, "We are now apprehensive because of the collateral damage in loss of lives and properties that may result from the illegal activities going on in the area.

"The Omo-Oniles (landowners) and their cohorts have gone as far as threatening some residents with adverse reprisals should they attempt to resist them."