

Gunmen kill market leader in Delta

**Dominic Adewole and
Gabriel Choba**

Gunmen have killed the Chairman of Udu Market, Freedom Isieke aka Opito, in Udu Local Government Area of Delta State.

His assailants waylaid him at Cross-and-Stop Junction, near Eketé Inland Junction along the DSC-Udu Expressway and shot him at close range.

The victim, who was driving his Pathfinder 'Jeep' during the ambush, tried to escape but he ran out of luck.

A friend of the deceased in Asaba yesterday revealed how the victim had narrowly escaped from being killed a week ago when gunmen trailed him to a ceremony but luck was on his side.

The attack has been linked to the crisis over the ownership of the Udu

Harbour Market between youths in Ovwian and Ow-hase communities.

It was learnt that the warring communities have sworn oath in anger over the supremacy battle of who controls the market but the late chairman had insisted that his community remained the sole owner.

"He (the victim) took the threat messages he had received over the crisis for granted. He was attacked last year. This is the third time gunmen have gone after him. I was two poles away when I heard the gunshots. When the gunshots subsided we rushed out only to see that it was Opito who was killed. He was attacked last week but God being so kind, he survived it."

The state Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Onome Onovwakpoyeya, in Asaba yesterday confirmed the killing of Opito.