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**19 March 2008**

Posted to the web 19 March 2008

**THIS DAY**[Email](#) This Page[Print](#) This Page[Comment](#) on this article**Ahamefula Ogbu**  
**Port Harcourt**

The anti-cult war in Rivers State has suffered a serious set back as the man said to be the brain behind the headway made by the Joint Task Force in uncovering the operations of militias in the Niger Delta, Mr. Gabriel Obom, has been shot dead.

THISDAY learnt that the man was shot in the presence of his family members by some unidentified gunmen who alleged that he was an "intel", a synonym for informant in Okirika.

He was said to have been severally threatened through text messages and calls before he was eventually shot dead.

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It was however not clear why the security agencies that he had been assisting in bursting the strongholds of the militia in the state, especially the outlawed leader of Niger Delta Vigilante Movement, Tom Ateke, could not provide him with enough cover.

Obom was said to have given the JTF information on the existence of a secret tunnel in Okochiri where a cache of arms was recovered as well as other tips which led to some successes of the JTF.

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He was also slated to be the star witness in the prosecution of the Amayanabo of Koniju, HRM Captain Nemi Iyala Oputibeya, being charged for murder, illegal oil bunkering, cultism and other offences.

The prosecution in the case was said to have listed Obom as one of the witnesses to give evidence against the monarch and two others, Mr. Nathan Alabo and Stephen Opungiriko for alleged murder, bunkering and cultism. Contacted, Spokesman of the Joint Task Force, Lt. Colonel Musa Sagir confirmed the death of the man, saying it as very painful and a sad development.

"We have heard about the killing. It is a very sad development for a man like that to have been killed. It is very painful not only to us but is also not good for the system. We cannot fight the criminal elements in our midst without informants and for a key informant like that to have been killed is of great concern to us the security agencies. In truth necessary precaution should have been taken," he lamented.

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