

ASP Shot Dead in Bullion Van Attack

An Assistant Superintendent of Police was shot dead while several other persons were wounded on Tuesday when a dared-devil armed robbers attacked a bullion van conveying money for a new generation bank in Delta State.

Undisclosed amount of money belonging to the bank was said to have been carted away by the robbers who disarmed the policemen inside the van before transferring the money into their own vehicle. Arms and ammunition belonging to the police escorts that inside the bullion van were also said to have been taken away by the robbers.

The bullion van, THISDAY gathered was conveying undisclosed millions of naira from Anambra State and was on its way to Benin when armed robbers who were laying ambush around the Issele-Uku end of the road attacked it.

Eyewitness told THISDAY that the robbers overpowered the armed policemen that were inside the bullion van and succeeded in dispossessing them of their arms and ammunition before transferring the money into the vehicle they came in.

The attack came as the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mike Okiro yesterday directed Commissioners of Police in the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory not to approve the release of policemen to banks for special escort duties unless such banks procured bullion vans that are bullet, fire and bomb proof.

The benefiting bank, according to him, must also undertake to provide two back-up vehicles for use by the policemen to escort the bullion van. Okiro warned that Commissioners of Police

•IG gives banks new conditions

From Victor Efizomor in Asaba and Onwuka Nzechi in Abuja

will henceforth be held liable for the death of any police officer whom they release to undertake escort duty for banks that refuse to meet the new conditions. The Inspector General of Police gave

the directive while presenting cheques to the families of policemen who were either killed or wounded by armed robbers. Okiro said that the daily loss of policemen who encounter armed robbers in the course of escorting bullion vans conveying cash and other valuables on behalf of the banks have become alarming and unacceptable.

Journalist, Policeman Killed in Bayelsa Boat Mishap

The race toward the governorship re-run election in Bayelsa State started on a sad note on Monday, when a journalist and police orderly attached to the Commissioner for Lands and Housing, Mr. Ayakeme Whisky, died when their boat capsized.

The two were on the commissioner's advance team, on their way to his country home in the deep riverine area, to sensitise the people on the election and why they must vote for Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The dead, Preye Vellor, worked with Radio Bayelsa, while the policeman, simply identified as Monday, was a sergeant.

Two other policemen who were on the same boat escaped by swimming to the river bank, while an aide to the Commissioner clutched to some floating object on the river before he was rescued. The accident occurred a few metres away from Agalanbiri Waterside, in Sagbama Local

From Segun James

in Yenagoa

Government Area of the state. Vellor, anchor of a popular local programme, "wake-up call," was the press officer attached to the office of the Commissioner.

The death of Vellor brings to five, the number of journalists lost to boat mishap in Bayelsa State. It would be recalled that during a similar PDP governorship campaign rally in the elections that brought in Chief D.S.P. Alamiyeiseigha, four journalists died in a boat mishap.

State Police Command Spokesman, Ibokette Inobong, confirmed the incident, but said he had little detail. Commissioner for information, Pastor Ebiwei Sokare, said the state government received the news with shock, and that the State Acting Governor, Mr. Werinpre Seibarogu and PDP flag-bearer, Chief Timipre Sylva have been informed.