

BUNGLED OPERATION: Police miss kidnapper, purportedly kill salesgirl in Delta

●Grieving father cries to IGP to fish out killer-policemen

●No such matter before us—SP Butswat, PPRO, Bayelsa Police Command

DELTA... THE BIG HEART OF THE NATION

By Chancel Sunday

BOMADI— MORE than two months after 13 police officers attached to *Operation Puff Adder*, Bayelsa State Police Command, stormed Bomadi, Delta State, and allegedly shot dead a 19-year-old salesgirl, Miss Ebikonboere Woduwei, at her father's residence, after stumbling in a gun battle with a suspected kidnapper, her family has cried out to the Inspector-General of Police, IGP, to uncover and put on trial the killer-policemen.

NDV learned that the police team from Bayelsa Command led by a Deputy Superintendent of Police, DSP, engaged in a gun duel with the suspected kidnapper in the early hours of March 22, along Oboro Road, Bomadi, but the suspect absconded.



•Late Miss Ebikonboere Woduwei

How they killed my daughter— Joseph Woduwei

Bereaved father of the deceased, Mr. Joseph Woduwei, said his daughter was shot in his house, along Oboro Road, Bomadi, by the policemen who left Delta after the botched operation for Bayelsa.

Mr. Woduwei, who reported the murder at the Bomadi Police Division, Bomadi, immediately after it occurred, alleged that investigation into the matter was being conducted in an unserious manner.

He said: "On 21st March, 2020, in the dead of the night, my wife was in labour and I rushed her to the Bomadi General Hospital.

"At about 2.00 am, my daughter, Miss Ebikonboere Woduwei, called me on phone in distress that armed robbers were breaking through the burglary proof at the balcony.

"On receiving the call, I went to inform a vigilante group at the Bomadi Bridge head, which accompanied me to my residence at Government Reservation Area, GRA, Bomadi. While we were approaching my residence, we met another vigilante checkpoint at the GRA.

"The head of the vigilante team at the GRA, Arefa Ebiye, told us that some policemen earlier drove past in two vehicles and told him that they were going for an operation along Oboro Road, Bomadi.

"He said they also warned that nobody should come in case of any gunshot within that area. While we were still talking, two Police vehicles came from the said direction and

drove past the checkpoint.

"The vigilante leader said they were the police team, which earlier informed them of their operation in the area.

"The vigilante accompanied me to my residence, which is about a kilometre away from the checkpoint, off the same Oboro Road, Bomadi.

Blood stains everywhere

"On getting to my residence, I saw that my kitchen door, entrance door, doors to my room and that of my daughter were destroyed with blood stains in my daughter's room.

"There were blood stains even in the parlour, but my daughter was not in the house. We started looking for her and eventually found her lifeless body at the entrance of the street leading to my house, along Oboro road.

"She was shot on the left side of her stomach at close range with the bullet piercing through her back.

"My neighbour, who was at home during the operation informed me that two policemen on multi standing along the street told him they were there for an operation to arrest a kidnapper.

How I knew killer-policemen came from Bayelsa

"Reporting at the Bomadi Police station, I got to know from their entry record that some policemen under *Operation Puff Adder*, Bayelsa State Command, came to carry out operation at Bomadi, same night, at

the same location at 21:20 pm on 21st March, 2020

"The said police team led by one DSP Chris with 12 others, in their exit record stated that there was exchange of gunshots with the suspected kidnapper, identified as John Frank Philip, who escaped, along Oboro road, Bomadi at 2.00 am, 22nd March, 2020.

"The matter is before Zone 5 Benin but investigation is foot-dragging.

"I am calling on the Inspector-General of Police to treat this matter with utmost seriousness because it is being treated with little effort when maximum effort is needed to reveal the truth," he said.

No such matter in Bayelsa Command DSP Butswat

Contacted, Police Public Relations Officer, PPRO, Bayelsa State Command, Asinim Butswat, said: "The matter is not before us, there is no report of such at the Bayelsa Command. You should go to the Delta Command."

Divisional Police Officer, DPO, Bomadi Police Division, Superintendent of Police, SP Patrick Uebari said: "I just took over the station and I have not been briefed. If the case has been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department and preliminary investigation started, the division does not have the jurisdiction to answer any question on it," he added.

NDV could not reach the PPRO, Delta Command, Onome Onowakpoyeya, for comments.