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## Gunmen kill 13 footballers, supporters in SE Nigeria

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Thirteen footballers and their supporters were on Friday evening murdered by some unknown gunmen in Ughelli in Southeast Nigeria's Delta State, according to the Punch newspaper on Sunday.

Seven others sustained varying degrees of gunshot injuries during the incident.

The Commander of JTF Wuyep Rintip and the Commissioner of Police, Delta State Command Joshua Oshiomogor, who confirmed the incident, described it as a mystery.

The deceased identified as footballers and supporters of Ocean Boys Football Club in Bayelsa State, were said to be travelling for a football match slated for Sunday in Ughelli before they were ambushed by the assailants at Uvweru community, near Ughelli in Delta State.

The Chief of Staff to the Bayelsa State Governor, Sam Ugbuku, who spoke from the scene of the incident, confirmed seven bodies had been deposited at a mortuary in Ughelli, Delta State. Ugbuku said he had already gone to the General Hospital in Ughelli to make arrangements for blood transfusions for the injured that had been rushed to the hospital.

At the Yenagoa club house of the teams, the imposing building on the usually busy Imgbi Road was deserted as all the supporters and back up players had deserted the hostel for safety.

Reliable sources in JTF and the Delta State Police Command told our correspondents that the unidentified gunmen, who emerged from the bush along the East/West Road, forced the bus conveying the footballers and their fans to stop a few kilometers to their destination in Ughelli.

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The security sources stated that the gunmen, who were apparently aware of the vehicle and the identities of its occupants, instantly opened fire on them.

Sources further revealed that the gunmen, who operated unhindered along the ever-busy highway, disappeared from the scene apparently after they wreaked maximum havoc on their victims.

Some motorists thereafter alerted the policemen operating at a nearby check-point to the sad development.

The clash between rival cult gangs had started on Friday night when a member of the supporters club belonging to one of the rival gangs was shot dead in the Opolo area of the state capital. Later in the night, there was a reprisal attack at the popular night club in Kpansia, where another person was killed. Several cars were riddled with bullets in the attack that took place shortly after midnight.

The gun battle at the night club extended to the supporters who were on their way to Ughelli for a match between their clubs at the weekend. The source stated, "There was a scuffle between the players and supporters of Ocean Boys and another team based in Bayelsa State (name withheld) on Friday. One of the supporters of the other team was killed in the fracas.

The Police Public Relations Officer of Delta State Command Charles Muka said police had begun investigations into the incident.

[Source:Xinhua](#)

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