

Corpse found after army disperses crowd in A'ibom

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File photo: Map of Akwa Ibom State

By Patrick Odey

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A dead body of a yet-to-be-identified man was discovered after operatives of the 2nd Brigade, Nigerian Army, in Akwa Ibom State, dispersed a crowd of suspected criminals.

PUNCH Metro learnt from a statement on Sunday by the assistant director of army public relations at 2 Brigade headquarters, Captain Lawal Muhammad, that the corpse was found alongside a coffin and later evacuated to the mortuary.

The statement also revealed that the army shot a criminal gang leader (name withheld) in the leg after he mobilised members of his gang to free a driver arrested for syphoning diesel from heavy-duty equipment belonging to Sterling Petroleum and Fertiliser Limited Company at Ukpe Ete, Ikot Abasi Local Government Area.

Muhammad said the operatives, acting on credible intelligence about criminal activities, conducted a follow-up operation that led to the arrest of the driver.

He explained that while returning the suspect and the stolen diesel to the company's headquarters for interrogation, youths barricaded the road, hurling stones and bottles in an attempt to free the suspect.

"In the violent situation, the gang leader was identified and shot in the leg. He was later evacuated to the hospital for treatment," the statement read.

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According to Muhammad, the youths subsequently vandalised private vehicles, harassed commuters, and attacked company trucks operating along the road.

"Troops were later reinforced from the brigade, and further operations in the area led to the discovery of a dead body with a coffin placed beside it.

"The remains were immediately evacuated to the mortuary by men of the Nigeria Police Force, reinforced by 2 Brigade operatives. Troops are currently securing the area and protecting company assets," the statement added.

The Brigade thanked members of the public for their support and cooperation and reaffirmed its commitment to safeguarding the lives and property of law-abiding residents in Akwa Ibom State.

It also urged residents to provide actionable intelligence to security agencies as investigations continue.