

Ebonyi: 7 robbers burnt to death

KENNETH OFOMA, *Abakaliki*

SEVERN persons suspected to be armed robbers have been lynched and burnt to ashes by youths of Okpuitumo community in Ikwo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

Commissioner of police Ebonyi State command, Mrs. Julie N. Iroha, who disclosed this at the command headquarters, Abakaliki weekend, said the corpses of the dead suspects had been recovered by her men in a near by bush in the community.

The Commissioner of Police in a related development

also paraded six notorious armed robbers believed to be terrorizing the state in the recent past.

She explained that some hoodlums numbering about sixteen, suspected to have come from Aba in Abia state, invaded the community at about 1.00a.m that faithful day with a truck marked XA218P, saying that they started shooting indiscriminately and robbed some innocent citizens of their money and other valuables.

The suspects, the commissioner said also carted away nine bundles of High-Tension cable kept behind the

village community into the waiting truck and also raped a girl of about 14 years, but luck ran out on them when the truck sank on their way out, which she said did not give them any other option than to abandon the truck and run for their safety through the bush.

According to Iroha, "a search for the suspects was carried out and the police succeeded in arresting one of the suspects who is presently assisting the police in their investigation while seven of the suspects were later traced inside the bush by the villagers who lynched and burnt them to death."

She narrated that the other six armed robbers were arrested on a tip off, in a hotel in Abakaliki while planning on how to carry out further operations.

The men who were arrested by the Eagle Squad Team of the police command were alleged to be responsible for robbery at NNPC Mega station site along Enugu—Abakaliki road, Coca cola depot, a bakery at Kprikpiri and a Tipper vehicle behind Presco campus of Ebonyi State University.

The items recovered from the suspects are three Golf cars, one cherokee jeep which was believed to be the instrument used for their operations and one tipper lorry.

The commissioner said that the tipper lorry was recovered from Onitsha in Anambra State where it was parked awaiting disposal and that it was made possible from the confessional statement of one of the suspects, who is the major receiver.

The police boss said that the suspects would be taken to court as soon as investigation and search for other members of the gang are concluded.

We lost only one scout in UK —Contingent leader

CHINYERE AMAECHI

AGAINST speculations that several members of the Nigerian scout contingent to the 21st World Scout Jamboree that took place in United Kingdom last month eloped by the end of the jamboree, the contingent leader to the mundial, Engineer Gilbert Akinlawon has said that they lost only one scout.

Akinlawon who is also the Lagos State scout commissioner disclosed this to *Saturday Champion* in his Lagos office in an interview.

In his words: "Unfortunately one of our boys disappeared on the second day to the closing ceremony. In fact, we could not participate at that ceremony because we were busy with the police over his disappearance."

Speaking on the missing boy whose name he gave as Elvis Ossai from Edo State, Akinlawon expressed a strong suspicion that apart from be-

ing aided the plan to elope must have been planned from the onset.

According to him, the 700 acres camp site was well policed as the children were camped according to ages with the leaders exercising no power over them as the organisers took charge.

Apart from the near absolute security of the camp, the leaders of the Nigerian team also took steps to ensure that the ugly incident may be nipped in the bud by holding unto the passports of all members of the team.

Engr. Akinlawon is not happy with local media reports which claim that several youths were missing. He said he is putting his reports together including media reports from London on the subject which he intends to make public when he is ready.

Apart from Nigeria some other states suffered a similar fate said the contingent leader.