

Ebonyi police kill robbery suspect

Police in Ebonyi on Monday killed a suspected armed robber and kidnapper, simply identified as Gaga during an gun battle.

The suspect was said to have been killed when he engaged the police in a shoot-out while trying to escape after robbing one Chief Michael Oke of N500,000.

Narrating his ordeal to newsmen, Oke said that the robber robbed him of the money in his home, after he withdrew it from a bank in Abakaliki.

"As he left with the money, I started shouting and my 23-year-old son, Ikechukwu Oke rushed from the house, but was unfortunately shot by the robber as he escaped.

"The shout attracted people around the area and they pursued the robber until he was eventually shot by the police while my son was rushed to the Federal Medical Centre, Abakaliki, where he died," he said.

Oke added that the cquincillor in the area, later handed over N250,000 recovered from the robber while the balance was still unaccounted for.

Mr. Chris Anyanwu, the Police Public Relations Officer, said he received a distress call from a good Nigerian of a robbery attack at Afikpo Street which made him alert his men who were on patrol.

"They swooped promptly on the area and with the aid of the residents and members of the Ebonyi Youth Council, intercepted and shot the robber, who

had engaged them in a gun battle," he said.

Anyanwu noted that the robber, whose full identity could not be ascertained, was foremost in the wanted list of the police for various crimes in the state which ranged from armed robbery, kidnapping and arson.

He also disclosed that police would unravel the circumstances behind the loss of N250,000, being

the balance of the money snatched from Chief Oke, as investigations into the matter progressed.

Anyanwu thanked residents of the area for their co-operation with the police and urged the public to always assist the police with useful information to enable it to rid the state of criminals, especially during these 'ember months'.

Ibibio leader warns monarch against partisan politics

THE Ibibio people of Akwa Ibom State have been warned of the inherent dangers in the ethnic association of supporting one governorship aspirant against others in the race for the Uyo Government House come 2011.

Akpan Uyo and Ntison Ibibio II, Sir Sebastian James Umoren, said in a letter to the head of Ibibio Elders Forum, Ntison Essien Ekidem III, that dragging traditional authorities into politics that way would put the unity and cohesion of the ethnic group in jeopardy.

Umoren's letter dated September 24 was prompted by an alleged move by some elements in the forum to stage a political meeting aimed at

endorsing the incumbent, Gov. Godswill Akpabio, for a second term in office.

"I am writing because it has come to my knowledge that some Ibibio political leaders seek to use the Asan (the sacred place of the Ibibio) and by extension Esop Imaisong Ibibio platform... While it is the right of everyone to hold whatever view they may please, it is my opinion that it should not be done in a manner that will seek to commit the Ibibio people to a cause that all may not believe in," the letter read in part.

Esop Imaisong Ibibio, like the Egbe Omo Oduduwa of old or the contemporary Afenifere or Ohanaeze Ndigbo, is the umbrella

cultural body of the Ibibio people.

Ntison Ekidem III was reminded of what happened in 1982 when Ntison I, took a political stand in favour of a certain party. "The result was the near-collapse of Esop Imaisong Ibibio. Today, the silent majority of Ibibio people are of a totally different opinion and I am appealing to you not to allow anything to be done to marginalise them," Umoren wrote.

He then counselled: "Do not allow anyone to jeopardise your authority before your people for political reasons... At this trying time for the Ibibio people, I pray that God give you the wisdom for the season."