

Imo: Gunmen kidnap royal father, kill dad, cousin

EMMA OGU, Owerri

26 January, 2010 06:02:00

Eze Samuel Ohiri of Orodo community in Mbaitoli LGA of Imo State has been kidnapped by gunmen, even as his father, Mr Festus Ohiri and cousin were shot dead during the abduction attempt.

State police commissioner, Mr. Aloysius Okorie could not be reached for comments while the command's Public Relations Officer (PRO), Linus Nwaiwu refused to comment on the incident saying that he was yet to be briefed on it.

Divisional Police officer for Mbaitoli Local Government, Mr. Bangs Kopshella confirmed the incident and saying the gang had not placed any ransom or established contact with the family of the royal father.

He said the gang took advantage of bush paths in the community which is closely located to the police station and carefully avoided the Owerri- Orlu road which happened to be a major route always manned by police men to carry out the operation. "As at now I am monitoring the situation and no ransom has been placed on the head of the traditional ruler. They killed his aged father and cousin but we are working hard to trace the perpetrators", he said.

The communication gap between the gang and family members of the royal father as well as their bloody operation have made indigenes of Orodo to suspect that they may be hired assassins.

In Owerri, a three man robbery gang on Monday invaded the popular Rotibi Street in Owerri housing the offices of most national newspapers in the country and distributors of products of the major manufacturing firms in the nation and robbed a prominent business man of unspecified sums of money.

The gang reportedly snatched the bag of money from the business mogul at gun point as he was preparing to go the bank.

The robbers shot indiscriminately in the air, leading to residents scampering for safety.

A mild drama ensued as the robbers after snatching the bag took to their heels, shouting thieves, thieves before fleeing the scene. Residents who spoke to our correspondent said they thought that the robbers were security operatives in mufti chasing criminals as it was not uncommon to see policemen in mufti clutching guns and commanding vehicles or chasing criminals. Others said they ran because they thought that the crisis in Jos, Plateau State had spread to Owerri.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Linus Nwaiwu who was contacted by our correspondent said he was yet to get a formal report on the incident.