

Soldiers kill 1, arrest 9 kidnappers after gun battle in Rivers

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NO fewer than nine kidnappers were arrested, while one was killed during a gun battle with soldiers at Omoku, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government area, of Rivers State.

It was learnt that the kidnap gang were nabbed after they had collected a N5million ransom from a victim in Omoku, during which they ran into a stop and search team manned by soldiers of the 2nd Amphibious Brigade, Bori Camp in Port Harcourt.

It was further learnt that the soldiers became suspicious when the gang in a Nissan Saloon car with registration number Rivers AH 41 DBU, refuse to cooperate with the search team.

When the team insisted on searching the car, the hoodlums opened fire on the soldiers instead, even as the security operatives returned fire immediately killing the driver on the spot.

Parading the suspects before newsmen at Bori Camp, Port Harcourt on Sunday, Acting spokesman of the 2nd Amphibious Brigade, Major Ahmad Dikko said three others also in the car were shot and wounded while two ran away.

Dikko said the names of the fugitives were revealed by those apprehended, saying, "They were traced, located and also arrested, although, he said the leader of the gang identified as Mr. Abati was still at large.

According to Dikko, "When they were stopped for routine check they refused to cooperate and instead opened fire on the soldiers who also engaged them in a shoot-out.

"The driver of the abductors car, a Nissan saloon with registration number Rivers AH 41 DBU, was instantly killed during the exchange of bullets.

"It was after their arrest that

it was discovered that recently they had kidnapped one Mr, Osah Mbadiwe Collins, who is also a resident of Omoku. According to Mr Collins, the gang had blocked his car on that fateful day.

"They forced him out and drove him blind folded to Ahoada where they hung him upside down for four days," the Army spokesman explained.

Dikko further said the kidnappers did not torture Mr. Collins, but that they forced him to pay a ransom of N5 million and even volunteered to drop him at his town on Sunday.

He explained that it was after they had dropped him that they ran into the army checkpoint, where they met their Waterloo.

The image maker of the 2nd Amphibious Brigade listed items recovered from the kidnappers to include: one AK 47, eight round lives of ammunition, three short gun cartridges and one machete.