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Friday, February 13, 2009

Police vow to arrest killers of officers in Edo robbery

- Recover arms in Delta
From Terhembra Daka, Abuja

THE Inspector-General of Police, Mike Okiro, has vowed that the security agents will arrest and bring to justice, the gang of robbers, who on Wednesday, killed some police personnel in Abudu, Edo State, during a robbery incident.

Okiro, who spoke in Abuja yesterday, denied media reports on the incident that the police lost seven officers during the exchange of gun-fire with the robbers, saying that the figure was inflated by one.

The IG, who was represented by the Force Public Relations Officer, Emmanuel Ojukwu, at a media briefing yesterday, said that only one policeman, a sergeant, was killed at the scene of the robbery while the other five were slaughtered in an ambushed laid for them by the robbers.

He said: "As soon as the attack was reported, anti-robbery men from Special Anti-Robbery Squad, Benin proceeded to Owa and engaged the robbers. One of the robbers was killed, but two policemen sustained injuries and were hospitalised.

"The escaping robbers later laid ambush at Ugonoba and attacked a police reinforcement, killing five police officers and removing their rifles. Another police reinforcement engaged them, forcing the robbers to abandon their three vehicles and flee into the bush," he said.

He said that although the "police successfully recovered 54 live rounds of 7.62 ammunition, three AK 47 magazines and a cash of N2,000 from the robbers at the spot, the hoodlums reemerged at Agbor in Delta State and attempted to attack a convoy of four Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) bullion van, but were repelled by a detachment of policemen who had been alerted on radio of the robbery incident in Edo, and had been ordered to cordon the road to prevent the fleeing robbers from escaping."

He added that one of the robbers was shot dead in Agbor during the attack on the CBN bullion vans.

Another set of ammunition, including one AK 49 rifle, 12 AK 47, one G3 rifle, 1,279 live ammunition for AK 47 rifle and the sum of N30,000 were recovered from members of the gang.

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The police in Delta State have seized 14 AK 47 rifles in different locations at Agbor and Umunede during their encounter with suspected armed robbers.

The Police Public Relations Officer in Delta, Mr. Charles Muka, said in Agbor yesterday that one of the suspected armed robbers was gunned down in a shootout with the police.

Muka also said that 1,145 live ammunition and nine magazines were seized from suspected armed robbers.

According to him, a Hiace bus with registration number EDO 292 BEN and a black KIA car with registration number 1M 58 A 46 were among the items recovered from the robbers.

Mr. Suleiman Fakai, Assistant Inspector-General of Police in charge of Zone 5, urged members of the public to assist the police in arresting the suspected armed robbers who escaped arrest.

The AIG made the appeal at Agbor Divisional Police Station on Thursday when the recovered items were displayed.

Fakai said that some of the suspected armed robbers escaped with bullet wounds, urging the people to report any person with bullet wounds to the police.

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