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## End of the road for suspected robbers

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Edo police kill four alleged hoodlums in Benin by-pass

RESPITE may have come for travellers using the Benin By-Pass, which has always been robbers' haven as four suspected armed robbers were shot dead Sunday morning during a gun battle between them and the police.

The operation was personally led by the Edo State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Folusho Adebanjo.

As at the time of filing this report, Adebanjo and a special squad of detectives were still combing the area popularly called "evil forest" and "haven for armed robbers." It was learnt that some of the injured robbers were still in the bush with bullet wounds.

The bodies of the dead and an arrested suspect with serious bullet wounds in his abdomen were brought to the state Command Headquarters of the Nigeria Police at 10.30a.m. and the suspect with bullet wounds identified himself as Sanda from Kebbi State. He claimed that he only joined his dead colleagues for the first time, because he needed money to go back to Kebbi State.

One AK 47, cutlasses and assorted charms were recovered from the armed bandits. It would be recalled that passengers and drivers are being robbed daily along the Benin by-pass, while in most cases the women among the passengers are raped by the armed bandits.

Adebanjo said: "This operation took place at about 5.30a.m-6.00a.m. Because we noticed that armed robbers who operate there always come out in the early hours when people are travelling or going to the market for their businesses, so we chose to also begin our operation around that time. Their activities along that by-pass have become an embarrassment and with intelligence, which we gathered, we laid an ambush."

"They normally come with a bus where they load themselves and when they get to the by-pass, they divide themselves into different groups, waiting at different locations to perpetrate their evil. You will look at the bus as an old one, maybe you will even think they are going to the farm but they are dare-devil armed robbers.

"You know that the by-pass leads to different states but unfortunately, these hoodlums make that place a haven for operation. So we stormed there this morning following a tip-off, we met them and engaged them. They engaged us, too. The result is what you are looking at now. Some of them are still in the bushes with bullet wounds, my men are still there pushing them and I am going back there myself because we are going to round up all of them."

"Armed robbers cannot be safe anywhere in Edo State. That is the message we have for them throughout this festive period and next year," he asserted.

