

'We specialise in snatching flashy cars'

By Odita Sunday

It was a day of reckoning for two suspected notorious armed robbers who specialise in snatching exotic cars in Delta, Anambra, Imo States and environs.

They were arrested by operatives of the Delta State Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in Asaba led by Ademola Adebayo, a Superintendent of Police.

While the suspects, Ifeanyi Anyaogu and Chidubem Nwaekwe were lucky to tell their stories, one of their gang members simply identified as Ike was shot dead during a gun duel with the police along Lagos-Asaba Expressway.

The gang had successfully snatched a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) from Owerri, Imo State and drove it down to Asaba, where they used the SUV to trail a man who was driving a Toyota Highlander SUV.

As the man was driving into his compound, the suspected armed robbers held him at gunpoint and used a battle-axe to hit him on the head after which they collected his SUV.

However, luck ran out on the suspects, as operatives of the state Anti Robbery Squad (SARS) led by Ademola Adebayo intercepted them.

The gang was said to have opened fire on Ademola and his team, who swiftly returned fire-for-fire, and during the shootout, one of the gang members was shot dead, two were arrested while others escaped with injuries.

One of the suspects, Anyaogu urged the police to pardon him as he vowed to repent.

"If I am left off the hook, I will not go into armed robbery again. I will become a born again Christian. I will



The suspects

never go for robbery. I swear with my life, I will be in church serving God. I will never do evil again."

"I know that what we did is bad, but the economy is not favorable and we must do something to make ends meet. Now that I know better, I feel very sorry for what I did. I did not want that man to die, that was why I begged my gang members to stop cutting him with axe. If they had continued to cut him with the axe, he would have died."

His accomplice, Nwaekwe blamed Anyaogu for his woes.

According to him: "I thank God that I was not killed during the encounter with the police. I would have died like Ike did. I was living a good life, managing as a commercial bus conductor. I later met Anyaogu. He was a bus conductor but he later left the

job."

"One day, I ran into him and he asked me why I was still doing the job he left. It was at that time that he told me that he buys stolen vehicles. He now introduced me to other gang members."

The Commissioner of Police, Delta State Command Mr. Ikechukwu Aduba said the suspects had been on the wanted list of the command.

"We noticed that the hoodlums were coming from neighbouring states and placed a surveillance on them. I now ordered the officer in charge of SARS, SP Ademola Adebayo and his team to fish them out."

"A few days after I gave that order, the hoodlums were arrested. One of them was shot dead, two arrested and two others escaped with bullet injuries."

The police boss said that a

few days ago, operatives of SARS also smashed a gang of notorious kidnappers who threatened to abduct a veterinary doctor, Dr. Michael Olatubosun and his 18 workers if he failed to pay them N5 million.

"The gang was carefully monitored and some of them have been picked. The arrested suspects have confessed that it was the Doctor's driver who arranged the deal," Aduba said.

He added that the driver has been on the run. "But I assure him, he will not run far as my men are on his trail. I want to use this medium to warn criminals, especially kidnappers and armed robbers to either repent from crime or quit the state, as Delta is no more a safe haven for them. I will deal ruthlessly with them if they fail to heed my warning," he said.

Cleric tasks churches on corporate social responsibilities