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# End game for culprits

By John Akubo, Lokoja and Anietie Akpan, Calabar on September 21, 2015 4:03 am



The kidnap suspect.

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A KIDNAP suspect met his Waterloo last Thursday when he attempted to escape after a Vigilance group rounded up his gang with an exhibit of stolen motorcycle and their victim. His colleague was also arrested.

The Kogi State Police Command described their apprehension as another breakthrough in the fight against kidnapping as the Command arrested two kidnappers- Wada Mustapha and Ibrahim Yakubu.

Parading the suspect yesterday at the Command headquarters in Lokoja, the State Commissioner of Police Mr Emmanuel Ojukwu, said the duo entered the compound of Mrs. Mary Ocheje on Wednesday through a car porch ceiling, collected five cell phones and took the woman away in her car.

He added that while the kidnappers were moving to an undisclosed destination, the car developed some problems, noting that the abductors forced the woman to walk inside the bush for about 20km from 1:00 am to 5:00 am on that fateful day.

According to him, as they were trekking, they met three men on a motorcycle, whom they beat to pulp and forcefully collected their motorcycle, using guns to threaten them.

Ojukwu explained that the kidnappers sandwiched the woman on the motorcycle, while they continued their journey, adding that when they got to one village called Imere, some villagers identified the motorcycle as that of their kinsman who had earlier intimated them that it had been snatched.

He added that the villagers, having discovered that the motorcycle was a stolen item from one of them started shouting "thief, thief," which alerted the vigilance group in the area. According to him, one of the kidnappers, Ibrahim Yakubu, died while struggling to escape from arrest.



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The Commissioner who cautioned the general public to be wary of criminal elements in the society, said violence, vandalism and robbery would not be tolerated by the Command.

The police boss promised that the other members of the gang would be arrested and charged to court.

Narrating her ordeal to newsmen 50-year-old Mrs Ocheje reflected that her rescue was an act of God, expressing her gratitude to Kogi Police Command and the vigilance group for their prompt action.

The victim described her encounter as “shocking,” saying the suspects from their conversation knew her, her husband and other members of her family.

Ocheje, who claimed to be the Chief Agricultural Officer in Ankpa Local Council of Benue State, said the suspects collected five mobile phones including her own before kidnapping her.

She said her abductors made her to walk bare-footed over 20 kilometers when the car developed a fault before they decided to snatch the motorcycle.

The other suspect, Mustapha, who said that he was lured into the operation, told the police that two other members of their gang were on the run. He said that his junior sister and one of Ocheje’s children were classmates.

Sixteen days after his abduction, kidnappers of Chief Asuquo Ekpenyong Ekpe, the elder brother of the immediate past Director of the Department of State Security, Ita Ekpenyong, have whittled down their ransom demand from N300m to N150million.

Family sources said they have opened up communication line with the family and they are insisting on N150m. Ekpe and his wife were abducted in the early hours of September 5 in his Creek Town home in Odukpani Local Council of Cross River State by unknown gunmen, who escaped in a boat through the creeks, even when the Creek Town jetty is manned by soldiers.

The villagers, who wanted their names off-print, expressed their displeasure at the entire security situation in the community before and after the kidnap: “Security agents up till now have not said anything tangible. We expect them to do better.”

Some of them are even linking the kidnap to political rivalry in the community between the former DSS boss and some top politicians in the village whose popularity have dwindled.

Even though normal life is going on at Creek Town, the people are living in fear especially when the creeks are becoming so porous.

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