

Suspected kidnappers kill hunter in Edo forest

From **Michael Egbajule**, Benin City

A hunter, simply identified as Suru Abanta from Ufa area in Igarra, the headquarters of Akoko-Edo Local Council of Edo State, was yesterday, killed by suspected kidnappers.

Abanta, popularly known as Odonkoro was shot dead while combing the large stretch of forest around Igarra and neighbouring communities with his colleagues and other members of the local vigilante group to rescue kidnapped victims.

A member of the vigilante group, who witnessed the killing, said the incident happened on Tuesday while one of the kidnappers was arrested yesterday.

He said: "We divided ourselves into two groups and went in different directions, but unknown to us, the kidnappers had sighted us. So, while we were trying to take position, they shot him. They were trying to round us up, but our colleagues who heard the gunshot started running to our direction and that was how the kidnappers ran away in panic.

"We later got to their camp where some items, including a phone without battery, sim card, and cooked and raw food were recovered."

On the arrested suspect, he said: "The man disguised as if he was waiting for a commercial vehicle along the Igarra-Ibillo road where he was caught, and he has been handed over to the police."

Recall that five people were kidnapped within two days along Farm Road in Igarra, and one of them was released after an undisclosed amount was paid as ransom.

Meanwhile, Edo State government has assured commitment in the fight against crime and criminality.